

**Oregon Commission for Child Care
Salem, OR**

9/12/03

Members present: John Sandusky, Kitty Piercy, Glenda Hamstreet (for Rep. Wayne Scott), Astrid Newell, Katherine Criswell, Cheryl Reece, Rep. Pat Farr

Pending members present: Rosetta Wangerin, Dee Dee Overholser, Lynne Angland

Members absent: Lisa Kopetski, Nina Roll, Martha Young, Martha Longsworth

Guests: Elizabeth Jacobs, JaNell Welker, Mary Nemmers, Tom Olsen, Gabriela Downey, Gary Burris

Staff: Claudia Grimm

I.) CALL TO ORDER AND COMMISSION BUSINESS

Chair Piercy called the meeting to order. She welcomed new Commissioners, and set the tone for the meeting by stating that the work of the Commission bridges political affiliation. Kitty said that it is exciting to see so many new faces, and our work as a Commission will benefit children and families throughout Oregon. Commissioners and partners introduced themselves. Claudia mentioned that she is working on developing notebooks for new Commissioners that will help explain the child care system in Oregon. Mary asked about a new member orientation. Claudia explained that this will most likely happen on a 1:1 basis. Mary offered to assist Claudia in explaining CCR&R (Child Care Resource and Referral) to new Commissioners. *The Commission website has recently been updated and new members can use the site as a tool in orienting themselves <http://findit.emp.state.or.us/occc/>. Tom will also give a power point presentation at the Commission retreat that will help members understand the child care system in Oregon.*

Kitty called for approval of July minutes. Claudia presented changes that Mary had given her with regard to Becky and Jeanette's presentation. John moved that the July minutes be accepted with the changes. Kathy seconded the motion. The minutes were accepted with unanimous approval.

Kitty announced that her one year appointment as Chair of the Commission has expired. She asked for nominations to the Chair position. John nominated Kitty to a second term as Chair. Kathy seconded the motion. Kitty was elected with unanimous approval. Claudia said she had spoken with Lisa prior to the meeting, and that Lisa was also supportive of Kitty's re-election. Claudia will notify the Governor's office, so that the re-appointment can be officially recorded.

Claudia gave a membership update. There are currently three vacancies on the Commission. House appointments are awaiting approval. The Governor's office is in the process of approving their pending appointments. Vacancies are Senator (Claudia is working with Tamara Brickman to fill this vacancy), Business (Senate appointment) and Labor (House appointment). Kitty asked the group how they would like to recognize Commissioners whose term of service had expired (specifically Vicki Sarazin and Gabriela Downey). After a brief discussion, the group decided they would like to present a plaque to exiting Commissioners at a future meeting. Claudia will look into the cost of having this done.

A subcommittee of the Portland City Club is undertaking a research study on early childhood development, child care and education. They have identified quality, affordability and availability as key issues in their research. As a result of their study, the City Club will make specific recommendations regarding child care in the Portland-metro area. Kitty contacted the City Club and introduced herself and the Commission. She offered to convene a panel presentation to the research subcommittee giving an overview of the child care system. On Thursday, September 25th Kitty, Tom Olsen and Bobbie Weber will give their presentation. Kitty will speak about the role of the Commission, its accomplishments and next steps in the financing quality task force strategic planning process. Tom will give an overview of the child care system, partners and current initiatives underway in Oregon. Bobbie will present the work of the Research Partnership and the quality indicators.

Claudia announced that Janet Hawkins with the Multnomah County Commission on Children and Families had contacted her and asked for the Commission's endorsement for the Walk A Mile project. The goal of this tri-county project (Multnomah, Clackamas and Lane) is to bridge the gap between policymakers and their constituents whose lives are affected by government policy. During the month of November, policy makers and low-income constituents will communicate once a week and participate in two in-person activities (i.e. applying for public assistance, going to the food bank, etc.). Additionally, policy makers will need to feed their families on the same amount of money that they would receive if they were on public assistance. Both Kitty and Rep. Farr have participated in this program and they said it was excellent. Rosetta mentioned that child care is requisite to being able to work or look for work. She mentioned that she would like to work with Walk A Mile organizers to make sure child care is included as an in-person activity--if not this year, then next. JaNell also said that she would be happy to follow up on this. The Commission voted to unanimously support the Walk A Mile project, and John will approach his local Commission on Children and Families and see if they would be interested in participating. *Follow through: Walk A Mile is a national curriculum administered via the University of Washington. I contacted Janet and faxed her the Commission's and Early Childhood Coordinating Council's position paper on child care as a workforce/economic development issue. She will use it as a resource in the*

Oregon training. Janet also agreed to contact Natasha Grossman at the University to see about adding child care as a component to the national curriculum.

II.) OCTOBER STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT

The Commission's annual strategic planning "retreat" will be Friday, October 10 from 9 am – 5 pm. Glenda Hampton offered to check with Rep. Scott and see if we might be able to utilize one of the hotels in the association that he is a member of. Rosetta volunteered to check with her church and see if it may be available. Claudia will find a facilitator from the Employment Dept. so that Kitty can be freed up to participate 100%.

The retreat will be held at Roth's Market, Doaks Ferry Conference Room. The market is located at 1130 Wallace Rd. NW, in West Salem. Detailed map and agenda forthcoming.

Agenda items:

- 1.) overview of the child care system and how child care fits into the employment department (Tom)
- 2.) overview of statewide child care initiatives/programs
- 3.) Prioritize Recommendations from the Financing Quality Child Care Task Force
- 4.) Revisit Mission, Vision and goals for the Commission
- 5.) Budget
- 6.) 2004 meeting schedule

The group agreed to table "brainstorming of ways to bring the Commission to other groups and connect with legislators" for another regularly scheduled meeting time.

III.) ABUSE OF CHILDREN IN CARE: REPORTING, INVESTIGATING AND ENSURING CHILD SAFETY

Una Swanson, Child Protective Services Program Manager; Dawn Hunter and Colleen Collins Child Protective Supervisors for Marion County and Detective Kris Wickman, Salem Police Department offered the Commission a presentation on what happens once a report of abuse in care is received. Dawn started by stating that Marion County has the largest child protective branch in Oregon. Child Protective Service's primary role in cases where abuse in care is reported is to assess safety and risk to other children in the care setting. Child Protective Service staff is trained in interviewing children. Staff work with law enforcement to ensure child well being. Detective Wickman stated that four of the nine detectives in the Salem Police Department's person's squad are trained in investigating child sex crimes. These detectives have received extensive training and work closely with child protective service staff. The discussion took a

preventative focus with regard to helping parents and providers increase the resiliency in children so that they become less vulnerable to victimization.

IV.) OREGON CHILD CARE RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP

The most recent work of the partnership, which has been federally funded by the Child Care Bureau since 1995, is the measurement of seven quality indicators. The partnership is proposing a pilot study, with the goal of improving quality in individual child care facilities. Bobbie stated that less than 10% of child care facilities in Oregon are considered to be good. In Oregon quality care is abundant in university towns (Corvallis, Eugene, etc.), and wealthier counties (i.e. Multnomah). Rural areas of the state tend to have poorer quality care.

Bobbie reviewed the seven quality indicators:

- Adult: child ratio
- Group size
- Education or specialized training of teachers/caregivers (the degree of warmth and nurturing the caregiver displays is directly related to training)
- Teacher/caregiver compensation
- Turnover/stability of teachers/caregivers
- Accreditation
- Substantiated complaints

A paper on the quality indicator study is currently at the printer and should be published by the end of the month. The Research Partnership hopes that Oregon will adopt a quality of care Benchmark (in addition to affordability and accessibility). Bobbie stated that if quality of care starts getting measured, people will begin to pay attention. It's important to engage people in the change process. Engaging local stakeholders is key.

V.) CHILD CARE DIVISION/FEDERAL UPDATE

Tom reported that Bobbie's husband Bruce has been in contact with an economist from Cornell University, Mildred Warner, who has been studying the economic impact of child care. Bruce is ready to embark on a similar study for Oregon. Bruce hopes to have the results of his study in power point format by December. Oregon Business Magazine has expressed interest in working with the Child Care Information Partnership in sponsoring a national speaker (possibly Mildred). Portland City Club and OPB may also be potential sponsors of a statewide business event that would bring attention to the economic benefits of child care, publicize the Commission's lead role in developing a strategic plan for financing child care in Oregon and highlight Oregon's Employer of Choice campaign.

Astrid asked about the child care benefits that the State of Oregon offers, since they are the largest employer in the state. Tom replied that there was an on-site center but it closed. On site centers are great for infant care, but lose their

appeal once kids enter the school system and are involved in activities in their local school and community. John said that the state should offer employees information on quality care and how to find it. Tom remarked that the Employment Department is in the middle of a huge restructuring of services. All unemployment insurance community offices will be consolidated into three central offices. The department is paying for moving expenses for employees that chose to relocate. The Employment Department is also contracting with local Resource and Referral Agencies to assist families find child care in their new communities. That is one example of how an individual state agency is responsive to their employee's child care needs.

Kitty brought up the fact that a Legislator can ask for a report from state agencies on what the agency is doing to respond to their employee's child care needs. Gabriela added that many times the flexibility that employees need depends on the Agency Administrator, Department Head or agency Human Resources Department.

VI.) PARTNER UPDATES

A.) COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

JaNell Welker explained the role of the Commission on Children and Families (OCCF) and how it differs from our Commission. JaNell said that local commissions are located in all of Oregon's 36 counties. Local commissions conduct comprehensive planning for children 0-18 years of age, with a focus on the 0-8 age range. The planning process utilizes a systems approach to identify the gaps, barriers and strengths in services and programs. The OCCF monitors, provides resources to the local Commissions, whose needs are determined by people in the community. Kitty remarked that we (OCCC) need to involve the local commissions to drive quality care in communities.

JaNell said the OCCF was also organizing a Harms-Clifford training of trainers. The Harms-Clifford Rating Scale is an assessment tool used to assess child care environments and care being provided. The training will be 5 days in length, 3 of which will be on using the tool and 2 will be intensive training for trainers. Having trainers in Oregon that can assist providers with improving the quality of their programs will build and strengthen the child care system. This strategy also fits with Bobbie's quality research and pilot.

B.) DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES; CHILDREN, ADULTS AND FAMILIES

Rosetta reported on the money that has been restored to DHS' budget affecting Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) and student child care. This money could potentially be lost again, pending the outcome of the ballot initiative (and subsequent voter referendum) to overturn state income tax increases. Effective October 1st, all ERDC co-pays will be reduced by \$18. The copy will be limited to \$25 for the initial month of

ERDC eligibility. The income limit remains at 150% of the federal poverty level. One million dollars was restored to the Student Block Grant program, which is slated to resume in January.

Rep. Farr told the Commission that the Legislature approved a disappropriation bill. He said that if voters approve to overturn the new state income tax increases, program cuts have already been decided. He prepared a presentation to the Eugene City Council on the budget cuts and asked Claudia to mail it to Commissioners.

C.) OREGON CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL NETWORK

Mary Nemmers said that the Network's annual fall conference will be held in November. The National Women's Law Center awarded the Network a \$25,000 grant for local R&R's to provide community outreach on using the child care tax credit. Oregon was one of eight states selected because our tax credit is refundable.

Mary and Tom explained that almost all child care programs and initiatives in Oregon are funded by a federal block grant. The Senate version of this grant is expected to go the Floor within the next week. Mary encouraged Commissioners to write Senators Wyden and Smith encouraging them to approve \$5.5 billion dollars in mandatory CCDF funding (Child Care Development Fund) over five years.

VII.) LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Tamara Brickman introduced herself to the Commission. She is the Employment Department's Legislative Coordinator. Tamara began with a report on the status of pending appointments to the Commission. All appointments were delayed due to the new administration and length of the Session. The Governor's office is proceeding with appointments. The Employment Department has a good working relationship with the Senate President's office, so Tamara does not expect pending appointments to be held up too much longer. Tamara discussed with the Commission ways that we could get the Speaker's office to move forward with appointments. Rep. Farr volunteered (and Glenda volunteered Rep. Scott) to contact Speaker Minnis and encourage her to approve the pending three appointments as quickly as possible. The Commission brainstormed ideas for the vacant Senator and Business positions.

Tamara gave a brief overview of the bills that passed this Session:
HB 2190: Gives Rule making authority to the Employment Department for the Child Care Division. Effective 1/1/04.

HB 2191: Adds the Director of the Employment Department, or at the Governor's direction, Chairperson of the Commission for Child Care to the State Commission

on Children and Families. Kitty has been appointed to serve, and is waiting confirmation by the Governor.

HB 2191 also expands the definition of child (in care) up to age 18 if he has special needs. It excludes certain child care facilities from regulation (facilities where parents remain on-site, parent coops), and decreases the match requirement for local R&R's. Became effective 6/11/03.

HB2783: Requires state agencies, boards and commissions that issue certain licenses, permits or registrations to record an applicant's social security number on their application (to ensure the applicant is current on his/her child support payments). Effective 1/1/04.

HB 3184: Modifies working family child care tax credit refund payments. Effective 1/1/04.

Kitty adjourned the meeting at 2:00 pm.