

NIH CHILD CARE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 22, 2004

Building 31 – Conference Room 7

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance:

Janet Austin, Deborah Fountain, Alisa Green, Susan Koester, Valerie Hurt, Jayne Lura-Brown, Juanita Mildenberg, Henry Primas, Susan Reider, Mary Ellen Savarese, Lisa Strauss, Tim Tosten

Members Absent: Barbara Murphy, Kim Plascjak, Qin Ryan,

Liaisons in Attendance:

ChildKind, Inc.: Lee Ettman, Namrita Dhillon

POPI: Paulina Alvarado, Lucretia Berlinski

ECDC: Anne Schmitz

First Environments: Donna McNeill

- I. Welcome and Introductions:** Janet Austin began the meeting by welcoming members, liaisons and guests.
- II. Approval of Minutes:** Members voted and approved the minutes from the March 4, 2004 Board meeting.
- III. Committee Reports:**

Chair: Janet Austin shared with members that the legislative proposal to expand the definition of an NIH employee, for the purposes of child care programs, to include Post Docs, IRTAs and Fellows has been sent forward to Dr. Kington for review.

Membership Committee: Susan Reider shared with members that Alisa Green and Lisa Strauss have reapplied for a full term (3 years) position on the Board. In June, the Board will have 2 full-term positions and 1 partial term (1 year) position vacant. The committee plans to hand out flyers at the Parenting Festival to begin recruiting for new members. The committee will review all applications, schedule and conduct interviews, and make their final decisions by the end of June in order for the new members to be on board by September. Mary Ellen Savarese shared copies of the latest edition of the ORS New2Use Newsletter that contained an article about the Board's search for new members.

Parenting Festival Committee: Janet Austin on behalf of the Board will ask Dr. Kington to send out the NIH global e-mail announcing the Parenting Festival. Alisa Green was pleased to share with members that the DOES had secured the funds and use of three shuttle buses to commute parents to and from the event. These buses will have signage identify them as the "Parenting Festival Shuttle". One bus will run directly from Building 50 to Executive Boulevard (NSC/6001 and EPS/EPN), one bus will run directly from Building 50 to 6701 Rockledge Drive, and one bus will run directly from Building 50 to 6707 Democracy Boulevard. Lisa Strauss shared with members her current roster of ICs that will be participating at the event. These ICs included OD, ORS, NIMH, NIAMS, NICHD, NCI, NINDS, NIDCD, NIAAA, and NEI. Alisa Green added that there will be a representative from FSAFEDS to discuss the flexible spending account, and parent volunteers to share their experiences with international adoptions. She passed around the Sign-up Sheet for members who wished to volunteer and assist at the festival.

Several of the Board members will be staffing their ICs tables at the event. As a request from last year's event, Deborah Fountain and Vi Black, NCI, will be staffing a table to explain and discuss the different benefits e.g., maternity leave, health insurance, etc., for employees in training positions (Post Docs, IRTAs and Fellows). Anne Schmitz will coordinate the hands-on activity tables that will be sponsored by the child care centers.

The committee will again have evaluation forms for parents to complete. This year, 75 of those forms will be a different color, and the recipients of these forms, when completed and returned, will receive a parenting book provided by the DOES.

Contractor Benefits Committee: Susan Koester shared with members that her committee has been looking at how to assist the increasing number of contractors (formerly FTE employees) remain a part of the NIH child care community. The committee examined the option of including these contractors along with the trainees in the Boards' legislative proposal and ran in to both legal and practical hurdles. The practical hurdle is simply that our current NIH Child Care Wait List for the centers is very lengthy. The legal hurdle is that these individuals are technically not NIH employees and the Board does not have the ability or authority to redefine them as one. The Committee's recommendation is to amend the current NIH Child Care Programs enrollment waiver policy so that NIH employees who are affected by A-76 can keep their child(ren) enrolled at the centers. The Board voted and will proceed to make a formal recommendation to the NIH, via the ORS, to revise the current policy to include personnel who have been transferred to contract positions as a result of A-76 actions or other agency decisions beyond their control. Mary Ellen Savarese will draft language for the Board to review for policy consideration.

IV. Follow up to March 4, 2004 Brainstorm Sessions : Janet Austin asked members to begin further discussing their ideas for alternate types of child care services the Board should consider pursuing as their priorities for the FY 2004-2005.

Alisa Green shared with members the results of a recent NIH wide e-mail survey on Employee Work Life Issues conducted by the NIH Work/Life Center. Approximately 2,000 surveys were completed. She highlighted the following interesting points of data the Board may want to take in to account when they begin considering alternate services:

- 32% of the respondents are seeking child care for children above the age of 5 yrs.
- 34% of the respondents had brought their child to work because of lack of appropriate child care.
- 26% of the respondents has left their child home but would rather not have.
- 24% of the respondents are using in-home care.
- 18% of the respondents are using other care by a nanny/babysitter.

The following services were discussed by the Board:

Provide a Parenting Resource Place:

- Create a space for classes, meetings, resource room, library, etc.
- Hire a Volunteer Coordinator to assist people who need help with those who can help.
- Offer assistance on how to survive "outside of the NIH campus".
- Offer multi-national Transition Services and seminars in various languages.
- Offer resource guides – written and web based.
- Establish a "Buddy System".

Partner with the Work/Life Center to help the NIH community:

- Offer services through LifeWork Strategies, Inc.
- Gain access to training for Relative Care/Nannies/and Special Needs Children.
- Expand community based program capacity.
- Organize a Family Child Care Network for the NIH.
- Provide assistance on how to navigate local/school systems that care for children and know your rights.
- Provide seminars on how to find and keep good nannies.
- Provide training to improve the quality of in-home/nanny care.
- Provide training to increase the capacity of in-home/nanny care.
- Identify back up/sick child care services.

Implement an NIH Child Care Subsidy:

- See if centers can spend their subsidy allocation in a better way and serve more families.

Child Care Board Communication:

- Form a Board Communication Committee.
- Raise awareness of the Board and child care issues.
- Articles and pictures of activities and events.
- Interviews of members, parents, etc.

Mary Ellen Savarese will compile the Board's new ideas and send them back out to the members prior to their June 10th meeting for review. Members were asked to identify which services will be their priorities for FY 2004-2005. These priorities will be included in the Board's Annual Report to the NIH Director. Janet Austin, Susan Koester, Jayne Lura-Brown and Susan Reider volunteered to work on the Board's Annual Report over the summer.

IV. Presentations – NIH Child Care Center Scholarship Activities: Each center is required by their Use Agreement to provide some type of tuition assistance through a scholarship program. Included in each members' Board packet was a summary on the most recent scholarship activities of each of the NIH child care centers. Members were reminded that all three centers were unique and had different corporate structures in the way they administered their scholarships. Each Center Director was asked to give a brief presentation.

ChildKind, Inc: Lee Ettman informed members that her center's scholarship program was fairly new. Their former program had been modeled after the current Montgomery County program, Working Parent Assistance, which they found to be complicated and difficult to manage. Their new program has been simplified and has been in place for the past 18 months. The center researched what the salary scales were for the various employment categories among the current population and the center's population. The center has also received a grant from FAES in the amount of \$13K. Parents who are Post Docs in the FAES Fellowship Program are entitled to receive tuition assistance from this grant. The center has 4 different categories parents may qualify under to be eligible for a scholarship. The center allocates approximately \$3,500.00 each year for scholarships. Parents who qualify will receive anywhere from 10% - 25% of their tuition subsidized by the center based on a 6 month contract agreement. After 6 months, these agreements are reviewed to ensure families are still qualified to receive assistance. The center currently has 3 families receiving tuition assistance.

Parents Of Preschoolers, Inc.: Paulina Alvarado shared with the Board that there are currently 37 families (35 Preschool families – 2 Kindergarten families) receiving tuition assistance at her center. The center has allocated this year approximately 5% (\$65K) of their total revenue for scholarships. There are only 120 children (Preschoolers and Kindergarteners) who are eligible for tuition assistance each year at the center. The center uses a sliding scale to determine a family's eligibility for tuition assistance based on the size of their family and their total family income. The Center Director determines which families meet the criteria for tuition assistance and will advise the center's Board of Directors.

Executive Child Development Center: Anne Schmitz reported that her center has allocated this year approximately 4% (\$73K) of their total revenue for scholarships. There are only 180 children (Infant through Preschoolers) who are eligible for tuition assistance each year at the center. 23% of these families are receiving tuition assistance with 56% of these families being Post Docs and Fellows. The center also uses a sliding scale to determine a family's eligibility for tuition assistance based on the size of their family and their total family income. The center's Board of Directors is currently looking at the structure of their scholarship program to determine whether these funds would be better spent by providing only 10% of their families a larger subsidy, than providing 23% of their families' smaller subsidy. Each family is currently receiving approximately \$2,000 in tuition assistance from the center for one year. The center also has a separate emergency subsidy fund that the Center Director will determine which families meet the criteria for this assistance.

Mary Ellen Savarese shared with the center directors that the Montgomery County Working Parents Assistance Program may be willing to partner with their centers to review their families' for eligibility for subsidies. The partnering with an outside organization would remove the burden from the centers having to request proof of family incomes, review these documents and determine how much tuition assistance can be provided.

V. Announcements:

- Tim Tosten updated members on the proposed Rocksprings Child Care Center. The Space Justification Document submitted by the DOES has been approved by the Space Recommendation Board for the ORS to move forward and develop a Program of Requirements (POR) to obtain space for the center. An ORF Project Officer has been appointed to work with Mary Ellen Savarese in preparing the POR. Once the POR is complete, the ORF will put out perspectives for space in the Rocksprings area. He also informed the Board that in his FY05 budget, the line item for a child care center in the Twinbrook area had been taken out by ORS.
- Mary Ellen Savarese shared with members a proposed schedule for Board meetings for the upcoming Board year beginning in September. These meetings will occur every 6 – 8 weeks and have taken in to account all religious and school holidays. She has asked members to review their calendars and at their June meeting they will vote to accept these dates. Meetings will continue to occur on Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. She also shared with members some interesting information collected by LifeWork Strategies, Inc. on the quarterly report (November 2003 – January 2004) for the NIH Child Care Waiting List Program. There are currently 892 children (representing 784 families) on the waiting list. This total is down from this time last year, possibility due to the recent expansion of one of the child care centers. The report continues to show that the largest demand for child care is for children under the age of 3 yrs. Additional data revealed that most of our NIH families live in Montgomery County, Maryland and many of them are employed by NCI.

Mary Ellen asked members if they would like for Lifework Strategies, Inc. and the NIH Child Care Programs to give a presentation in the fall that would educate members on the demographics of each center and the management of the NIH Child Care Waiting List Program. She congratulated ECDC for undergoing and passing 2 GSA inspections within the past 2 months. The results of the water testing conducted at ChildKind, Inc. and POPI report that there is no lead in their pipes. Copies of the results were shared with the center's Board of Directors. Water testing has also been conducted at ECDC and the results will be provided next week.

Parents Of Preschoolers, Inc.: Paulina Alvarado shared with members that on April 7, 2004, the center hosted its Spring Dance Recital at the main auditorium in Building 45 (Natcher). Hank Primas and Alisa Green attended the memorable event.

Executive Child Development Center:

Mary Ellen Savarese shared with members an article that was printed in the NIH Record highlighting a recent activity. Children at the center made gifts, cards, posters, fans, bookmarks and pictures for the troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. The center shipped a total of 13 packages. Parents and staff purchased telephone cards and the center was thrilled to receive a telephone call from one of the soldiers in Iraq.

First Environments: Dona McNeill updated members on the status of their new child care center with EPA. This center will be replacing an existing building and will allow for program expansion (from their current population of 134 to 176 children). Construction is slated to be completed by the spring of 2005.

V. **Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

**The next meeting is scheduled for June 10, 2004
Building 45 – Rooms C1/C2**

Prepared by:
Pamela Jenkins
June 4, 2004