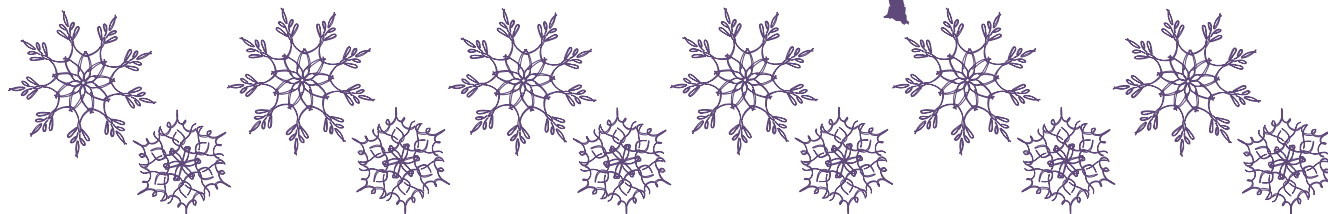


AECA Update



Dear Members,

During my term as President, one of my goals is for the organization to get involved in a state-wide community service project. We have decided to create “Isolation Activity Kits” for Arkansas Children’s Hospital. Many of the patients enjoy having activities to do while at the hospital. You can help by collecting different toys and bringing them to a local affiliate meeting or an AECA board member, or you may collect items all year and bring them to the AECA conference in October. More details are located on our web-site, www.arkansasearlychildhood.org.

We kicked off the project at the Winter AECA Executive meeting in February. We have already collected enough items to make several isolation kits. This project can help many children and families for years to come. Let’s get busy, involved, and active. We can make a difference!

I hope many of you are planning to attend the SECA conference March 27-29 in Kentucky. This will be an exciting opportunity to network with early childhood professionals from the South. For more details and registration information visit, www.southernearlychildhood.org.

In the last newsletter, I mistakenly gave the wrong dates for the AECA conference in October. Please note the correct dates are October 16-18, 2008. You will find the call for proposals inside. Please consider sharing your knowledge by submitting a proposal to present at the 47th Annual AECA Conference.

Included in this edition, you will find a request for nominations to the AECA Executive Board. Please take a few moments to reflect on individuals that you feel would be an asset to this organization. Maybe that person is YOU! Candidate information and voting ballots will be mailed in the spring newsletter.

I want to encourage you to check out the AECA web site at www.arkansasearlychildhood.org. We are dedicated to keeping you informed. This is a great place to get additional information and find out more about our organization. If I can be of assistance to you in anyway, please don’t hesitate to contact me at tjohnston@uaex.edu.

Sincerely,

Traci A. Johnston, AECA President

**2007-2008
Executive Board**

President

Traci Johnston
Little Rock

President-Elect

Barbara Gilkey
Little Rock

Immediate Past President

Vicki Shelby - Paragould

Secretary

Angela Van - Magnolia

Treasurer

Dawn Jeffrey - Batesville

Historian

Joy Smith - Batesville

1ST VP Publications

Lindsey Smith
Little Rock

2nd VP Membership

Tina Ross - Little Rock

Members-at-Large

District #1

Susan Lindblom
Batesville

District #2

Johnnie Bridges
North Little Rock

District #3

Deb Kee - Bentonville

District #4

Susan Smith - Hamburg

SECA Representative

Joanna Grymes
Jonesboro

AECA is a Great Deal!

As a member, you receive your professional membership in our state organization as well as in the Southern Early Childhood Association. You receive this great newsletter, as well as SECA publications like *Dimensions of Young Children*, which are full of ideas and resources to help you in your work with young children and their families.

Just like in your daily life, costs keep getting higher and higher! Postage and printing for publications have increased. And, in an effort to not just maintain but IMPROVE the services you receive, AECA is going to make a relatively small change in the way we charge the membership fee. Rather than have different amounts due for different affiliates, on September 1, 2008, the membership fee will become \$30 for ALL professional members and \$25 for ALL full-time student members.

News from SECA

Joanna Grymes, 2008 – 2010 SECA Representative

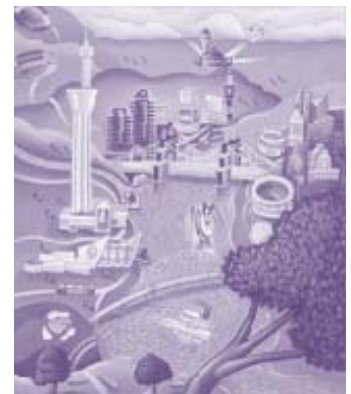
Hello, from your new SECA representative!

I hope to represent our state well to SECA, and represent SECA well to you, our members. Please feel free to contact me at grymesj@astate.edu with any questions or concerns you have and I'll do my best to address them.

There are two BIG things coming up. First and foremost, the SECA Conference, in Northern Kentucky! The conference has big names attached – Sue Bredekamp, Becky Bailey, Ron Lally, Trout Fishing in America... for just a taste. This will be a terrific conference and we hope you are planning to attend. You can find more information about the conference, including registration and housing options, at www.southernearlychildhood.org, then select **Conference**.

For the second big thing, keep a look out in your mail in February/March. You should receive a NEW SECA membership card, with a membership number. Even if you've just renewed your membership, you should receive this new card with an assigned membership number.

Keep an eye out for updates on the SECA website. If you haven't peeked in a while, you might have missed the resources that are continuously added to help you provide better experiences and services to young children and their families. Also, there will be new SECA publications coming soon! As more information about these are made available, I will let you know.



**AECA Mission Statement : Enhancing the lives of children, families
and early childhood professionals in the state of Arkansas.**

ARKANSAS EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION
47th ANNUAL CONFERENCE
October 16-18, 2008

Hot Springs Civic and Convention Center

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Making Connections through Relationships, Responsibility & Research

The AECA Conference is an opportunity to interact and network with early care and education professionals around the state. Interest Sessions are for child care providers and educators in the early childhood field. Interest Sessions are one hour in length and should focus on practices, trends and issues in early care and education, birth to age eight. There are 10 competency areas your proposed Interest Session may fall under.

Competency Areas:

1. Child Growth and Development
2. Creating Caring Communities to Support Learning and Development
4. Supporting Learning and Development through Curriculum Planning and Implementation
6. Assessment and Evaluations
7. Family
8. Professionalism
9. Program Management
10. Nutrition

Based on evaluation responses from last year's conference participants, AECA would like this year's presenters to consider submitting an Interest Session proposal addressing specifically requested topics.

Requested topics from participants:

- Infant & Toddler
- Special Needs
- Challenging behaviors
- Themed curriculum/unit experiences
- Training Track – Training Track sessions will be for trainers only and will address facilitating adult learning.

For more information about the
 AECA conference visit:
www.arkansasearlychildhood.org

EXPENSES

No AECA Funds are available for presenter expenses. **All presenters must pre-register for the conference.** One presenter for each session is provided complimentary registration. AECA does not furnish any audio-visual equipment.

PROCEDURE

1. Proposals for session formats are to include:
 - A. Name, address, (please include summer address), telephone numbers, email address, and professional title of individual making proposal.
 - B. Name, address, telephone numbers, email addresses and professional title of other presenters.
 - C. Title of presentation that clearly and concisely describes its content.
 - E. Target audience (example: administrators, infant/toddler, and school-age, all).
 - D. Would you repeat this session?
 - F. Outline and description of topic and format (less than 200 words).
 - G. A 20-30 word abstract of the proposal. (This description will go in the conference program.)
2. Submit a copy of your proposal either electronically to: mwynn@jtlshop.jonesnet.org or mail to: Michelle Wynn, AECA Program Chair
 614 East Emma, Suite 107
 Springdale, AR. 72764
3. Proposals must be received by **May 21, 2008.**
4. Notification of acceptance will be made by **July 11, 2008.**

For additional information about presenting
 contact Michelle Wynn at 479-751-3463 or
mwynn@jtlshop.jonesnet.org



Remembering Dr. Mildred Vance

Early Childhood Education Staff at Arkansas State University

We are saddened by the death of Dr. Mildred B. Vance on February 1, 2008. Dr. Vance devoted her life to education. Her greatest impact was her work to promote the education and development of young children. For Arkansas, Dr. Vance was a fundamental influence on the first Head Start programs and the creation of public school kindergarten. Throughout her career, Dr. Vance was a teacher, a lobbyist, and an advocate for children and families who could not speak for themselves. As such, she was the ultimate example of what AECA strives for; that is not unsurprising, as she was a charter member of the Southern Early Childhood Association when the organization came into being in Nashville, Tennessee. Her legacy, through the programs she created, the children she taught, and the teachers she mentored, will be immeasurable.

AECA Serves ACH in 2008

AECA Community Service Committee

AECA is launching a year-long community service project for 2008. We wanted to help an organization that supports children and families throughout Arkansas. The AECA Executive Board, along with the community service committee, has chosen **Arkansas Children's Hospital (ACH)** as the focus of this year's service project. ACH has a variety of volunteer opportunities, but we have chosen to focus on items for activity kits for children in isolation. Many ACH patients enjoy having activities to do while in their rooms. AECA will be able to donate **213** activity kits, if each member of AECA collects just one toy or item listed below.

Infant/Toddler 0-3 yrs

Rattle
Teether
Pacifier
Ball
Stuffed animal
2 Soft books *or* 2 Board books

Pre-school 3-5 yrs

Sound book
2 Books
Soft Doll/Stuffed Animal
Fat Crayons
Coloring book
2 Puzzles - 24 pieces or less (Female)
Big Truck (Male)

Elementary 6-8 yrs

2 Barbie Dolls (Female)
Set of extra Barbie Clothes (Female)
Action figure (Male)
2 Match box cars (Male)
Uno Cards
Crayons
Coloring book
Craft kit
Book

We need YOU, the members of AECA, to get involved! You can donate one item, multiple items, or enough items for multiple kits! We do ask that you *donate only the items listed above*. All items collected will be sorted, and assembled in kits appropriate for each gender and age group. AECA will purchase the bags for each kit.

Items will be collected at local affiliate meetings throughout the year. They will also be collected at the AECA Annual Conference on October 16-18, 2008 in Hot Springs. Any AECA board member would also be glad to accept donations. A list of members is located on our web-site at www.arkansasearlychildhood.org. Or you may directly contact AECA President, Traci Johnston, at 501-671-2364 or tjohnston@uaex.edu.

If you would like to make a monetary donation to this effort, please make checks payable to **AECA** and make sure to write **Community Service Project** on the memo line of your check. Then, mail to:

AECA / P.O. Box 2898 / Little Rock, AR 72203



ARKANSAS CHILDREN'S WEEK, April 13-19, 2008

"I'm not just playing — I'm learning"

By Diana Courson, OM-ECA

As children play, they are learning about the world. They are learning how to think, how to create, how to read and write, and how to live with others. Celebrate play and learning during Arkansas Children's Week (ACW), April 13-19!

Register for one of the ACW workshops, which will be conducted at 21 sites throughout the state. To register for a workshop in your area, call ASU Childhood Services, 888-429-1585, or register online at <http://professionalregistry.astate.edu>

Ten regions in Arkansas are hosting **Family Play Day** events during April. These activities are designed to engage children and families in play activities and to provide information on local resources for families.



Batesville	April 5, 9:00-1:00	Riverside Park
Harrison	April 12, 10:00-12:00	Minnie Harris City Park
Hope	April 16, 10:00-5:00	Experiment Station/Harvest Farm in Fulton
Hot Springs	April 19, 10:00-2:00	First United Methodist Church Christian Life Center
Little Rock	April 19, 10:00-2:00	Arkansas Children's Hospital (East Campus)
Magnolia	April 19, 1:00-3:00	First United Methodist Church
Monticello	TBA, 10:00-1:00	City Park
Paragould	April 5, TBA	Community Center
Pine Bluff	TBA	
Springdale	TBA	

Use the **Planning Toolkit** to conduct a Family Play Day within your program and to publicize Arkansas Children's Week in your community. The Toolkit includes ideas for hosting a Family Play Day, a sample press release, a mayor's proclamation, radio announcements, a t-shirt order form, and more to help you plan your celebration. Download the Planning Toolkit at <http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare/acw/acw.html>

Free ACW materials are available upon request* for use in your program and community.

- Brochure for parents, "Join Me as I Play"
- Church Bulletin Insert
- ACW Bookmark, "I'm not just playing—I'm learning"

*Print and submit the order form from page 16 of the ACW Planning Toolkit.

You're Invited!

Ann Patterson, AR Head Start

Celebrate Arkansas Children's Week by participating in a one-day workshop on "Teaching and Enhancing Learning Through Music & Movement" to be held in Little Rock on April 16th and April 17th, sponsored by the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office and Head Start Association.

Al Stewart, the Early Learning & Literacy Content Specialist with Region 6 Head Start Training & Technical Assistance Network, will be facilitating this interactive session which will allow teachers in Head Start, Pre-K and Child Care an opportunity to experience developmentally appropriate activities that may be used in the classroom for young children ages 3 – 5 years. A number of ideas and suggestions will be shared for introducing new concepts and enhancing learning objectives in the following developmental areas: language, literacy, mathematics, social/emotional, science and motor. Participants should wear comfortable clothes and shoes and be ready to take part in all of the activities shared during the session.

Class size is limited to 50 participants each day. For additional information, please contact the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office at 866-371-0740 (toll-free) or email ann@arheadstart.org

Activities Any Parent Can Do To Promote Learning

Barbara Gilkey, AECA President Elect

We all know that learning begins in the home and that parents are their child's first teacher. There are many opportunities for children to learn at home through everyday chores, tasks and social interactions. Parents need to know that their role in the education of their child is important and needed.

Learning opportunities present themselves in a variety ways. Parents are encouraged to take advantage of time spent with their child while shopping, traveling, eating, and playing. Young children need to develop knowledge and skills that will ultimately lead to successful and positive experiences when they start school.

Listed below are ideas that may be used in the home to help parents help their child develop skills in language, fine motor, gross motor and pre-math.

Language

- Use old catalogs and magazines for locating pictures, naming objects, and classifying.
- Use bath time for naming body parts and teaching concepts such as hot and cold.
- Read books often. Talk about them and encourage children to retell stories.
- Use language prepositions such as on-off, up-down, over-under, between-behind, when dressing, cooking and bathing.

Gross Motor

- Make a line using masking tape and practice walking on it forward, backwards and sideways.
- Use soft balls for rolling and throwing into laundry baskets or paper bags.

Fine Motor

- Use plates, cups, etc. for tracing.
- Use clothespins to practice opening and closing. Draw colors or numbers on the pins and match them to the same number on paper plates.
- Use yarn and fabric pieces for pasting and gluing.

Pre-Math

- Use clean butter containers for counting sets and sorting.
- Count throughout the day with your child i.e., mail, silverware, steps to climb, etc.

Area Events

Northwest Arkansas Early Childhood Association Mtg.

Date: March 6, 2008

Time: 6:30 pm

Location: Building Bridges, 110 Bella Vista Rd., Bentonville

Topic: Creating Quality Classrooms

Featured Speaker: Krista Iba-Armstrong, ASU

For more information contact: Michelle Wynn, NWAECA President, (479) 751-3463, mwynn@jtlshop.jonesnet.org

Northwest Arkansas Spring Provider Conference

Date: April 12, 2008

Location: Jones Center for Families in Springdale

Contact: Michelle Wynn at (479) 751-3463 or mwynn@jtlshop.jonesnet.org or visit www.nwachildcare.org

Northwest Arkansas Early Childhood Association Mtg.

Date: April 3, 2008

Time: 6:30 pm

Location: Helen Walton Enrichment Center, 1701 NE Wildcat Way, Bentonville

Topic: Creating Communities with Children

Featured Speaker: Michelle Stevens, Director

For more information contact: Michelle Wynn, NWAECA President, (479) 751-3463, mwynn@jtlshop.jonesnet.org

Fort Smith Provider Conference

Date: April 19, 2008

Location: University of Forth Smith – Echols Building

Contact: Michelle Wynn at (479) 751-3463 or

Shelli Henehan at (479) 778-7917

or visit www.nwachildcare.org

Northwest Arkansas Early Childhood Conference

Date: April 26, 2008

Time: 8:00 – 3:00

Location: Bentonville High School – 1901 SE “J” Street

Topic: I’m Not Just Playing – I’m Learning!

Cost: \$15.00 per person – lunch included

Contact: Deb Kee at (479) 254 – 5040 or dkee@bentonville.k12.ar.us

Calendar of Events

- NWAECA Meeting March 6
- NWAECA Meeting April 3
- Arkansas Children’s Week April 13 – 19
- Articles for Next Update Due June April 15

“Everybody can be great... because anybody can serve.”

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



READ ACROSS AMERICA

Angela Van, MECA

You’re never too old, too wacky, too wild
To pick up a book to read with a child.
 You’re never too busy, too cool, or too hot,
To pick a up a book and share what you’ve got.
In schools and communities,
Let’s gather around,
Let’s pick up a book,
Let’s pass it around.
There are kids all around you,
Kids who will need
Someone to hug,
Someone to read.
Join us in your own special way
And participate in
America’s Read to Kids Day.



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Dear Member,

This quarter's Update is packed with great ideas and information from members just like you! The Update is a medium for affiliate leaders to communicate information about upcoming events with their members. It also gives our members the opportunity to voice their ideas and opinions. So, if you would like to share activity ideas, stories about the children in your care, classroom tips, or parent involvement ideas with your peers, here is your opportunity!

If you would like to contribute to the next Update, please submit your entry no later than April 15, 2008. Remember, you can submit as little or as much as you like. Contributions can be sent to Lindsey Smith at lsmith@uaex.edu or PO Box 391, Little Rock, AR 72203.

I look forward to hearing from you!

Lindsey Smith

Lindsey Smith, First Vice President - Publications

