

Laurie Glaze, Chair  
Adoptation  
Avondale House  
Bering Omega Community Services  
Care for Elders  
Career and Recovery Resources, Inc.  
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston  
ChildBuilders  
CHILDREN AT RISK  
Christ the Good Shepherd Catholic Church  
Coalition for Behavioral Health Services  
Collaborative for Children  
Communities In Schools  
DePelchin Children's Center  
Family Services of Greater Houston  
Fort Bend Regional Council on Substance Abuse, Inc.  
Gateway to Care  
Good Neighbor Healthcare Center  
Gulf Coast CHIP Coalition  
Harris County Healthcare Alliance  
Healthcare for the Homeless-Houston  
Houston Area Association for the Education of Young Children  
Houston Food Bank  
IntraCare Hospitals  
Jewish Family Service  
Justice for Children  
Legacy Community Health Services, Inc.  
Memorial Hermann Healthcare System  
Mental Health Association of Greater Houston  
NAMI Metropolitan Houston  
Neighborhood Centers, Inc.  
Northwest Assistance Ministries  
San Jose Clinic  
SEARCH  
South County Community Clinic, DBA The Community Clinic  
Spaulding for Children  
Target Hunger  
Texas Children's Hospital  
The Arc of Greater Houston  
The Center for Success and Independence  
The Arrow Project  
The Network of Behavioral Health Providers  
United Way of Greater Houston  
Wesley Community Center  
YMCA of Greater Houston

## Early Childhood Education

### Position Statement approved by One Voice: August 11, 2006

Investments in quality early education have been proven to reduce long-term health and human service costs for all Texans. Recent studies report conservatively that \$1 invested yields \$3 in savings. Whenever a family cannot access an early education program or must accept a low quality program, that family is at greater risk of needing a wide range of social services. Further, that child is likely to enter Kindergarten behind by up to two years, with little chance to recover that lost education. The costs to society through the criminal justice system, lower high school graduation rates, higher drug use, higher teen pregnancy rates, lower literacy rates, and higher health care costs put a financial strain on all Texans and reduce the long-term earning potential of the state's workforce. These policy recommendations seek to increase access to quality early education programs for children, age birth-to-five, by leveraging prior investments and focusing resources on the critical earliest years of child development.

**Expand Access to Pre-Kindergarten:** Support expansion of an integrated model of service delivery among Pre-Kindergarten, Child Care and Head Start to increase access to full-day, full-year quality Pre-K services. The Texas Early Education Model (TEEM) will serve as the basis for a "school connected" system that utilizes all available and appropriate providers.

**Increase Child Care Subsidies:** Increase available state funding for child care subsidies by using a portion of the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) block grant (to the extent allowable by federal guidelines) for child care and increase the subsidy reimbursement rates for child care centers to better reflect cost of care (rates have been frozen for the last six years).

**Improve Viability and Quality of Care for Infants and Toddlers:** Increase the allocation of funds to local Workforce Boards specifically to target the learning and development of infants and toddlers in licensed child care centers, licensed family homes and registered family homes. Provide flexibility to local Workforce Boards in determining the best strategies to implement to achieve maximum impact on infant and toddler care.

**Enhance Programs Through Professional Development:** Increase the pre-service hours to a minimum of forty for licensed childcare center workers (up from 8 hours). Increase the annual number of continuing education preschool training hours to forty eight per year for all three systems (child care, Head Start and public Pre-Kindergarten) to match public school requirements. Require that persons delivering training must be registered on the Texas Training Registry.

**Legislative Outcomes:** SB50, which would have addressed the recommendations regarding access to pre-kindergarten and child care subsidies legislatively, did not pass. However, \$15 million for the biennium was appropriated for continuation of Pre-K services through the TEEM model and \$184 million for Pre-K expansion grants. These amounts represent level funding from the 2006-2007 biennium; the Legislative Budget Board had recommended a \$20 million cut at the beginning of the session. In addition, \$18 million for the biennium was appropriated to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) for the purpose of increasing child care reimbursement rates for child care providers meeting specific quality criteria. This was new funding.

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### **Position Statement approved by One Voice: August 11, 2006 (cont.)**

SB1141, which would have provided for child care consultants to improve quality of care for infants and toddlers, did not pass. No legislation was proposed to allocate funds to local Workforce Boards to target learning and development of infants and toddlers in child care.

No legislation was proposed to address pre-service or annual training hours. SB50, which would have addressed trainer qualifications and strategies to support professional development of early childhood education providers, did not pass. However, \$2 million was appropriated to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for regional professional development partnership projects to improve the recruitment, retention and quality of professionals working with young children. This was new funding.

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