



# CHILD CARE

Fall 2007

# News

## 2007 – 2008 Board of Directors

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## *President's Message* by Shannon Erickson, SCCCA President



When I began in the early childhood education and care profession, like many of you, I knew it was where I was supposed

to be. I experienced the joy of sharing my day with children who were alive with a thirst for knowledge and full to the brim with physical and emotional energy. I thrived in those experiences and thought that I would be in the classroom with children forever.

I pushed the envelope, when as a non-traditional student at age 32 (with children ages ten and nine), I went back to college and completed my Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education at the University of South Carolina Beaufort. I have enjoyed working in public, private, and parochial early education and care facilities and have been lucky enough to work with infants through 8<sup>th</sup> graders.

I pushed the envelope again, when I purchased a private child care center, and made a go of it as a Director. And pushed even further when that one school grew into three.

Some grounding came my way when I became acquainted with the South Carolina Child Care Association. I started as a member, moved to a

Board member, then became Board President. I have enjoyed that job for 2+ years and was just recently elected for my third term. I am so proud of the SCCCA and our strong presence in the state. The envelope got pushed again when as SCCCA President, our legislative chair went on maternity leave, and I found myself surrounded by legislative action affecting our industry. Jokingly, our lobbyist, Jeff Thordahl, asked me when I was going to get elected so that we could have a voice and vote in the General Assembly.

That jest has come to fruition as I have pushed that envelope yet again. On Monday, October 29<sup>th</sup>, I was sworn in as South Carolina Representative for House District 124. I was elected to fill the second year of a two-year term vacated by our Representative who is now our Senator. I will have to run again next year.

With the honor of entering public office comes the sadness of resigning as President of our Association. I am certain that our Vice-President, Jerry Cook, will move into the Presidency with vim and vigor! I pledge to you that I will **always** be an advocate for young children, private early education and care, and the folks who provide those services. I have

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# Legislative Update

Fall 2007

**Jeffrey N. Thordahl and Hope Lanier**

As the South Carolina General Assembly prepares to convene for the 2008 Legislative Session in January, the SC Child Care Association also needs to prepare for legislators to consider a number of issues critical to the child care industry.

The one overriding issue that will carry over from the 2007 session is the possibility of replicating the Four-year-old Kindergarten (4-K) pilot program to counties statewide. After significant negotiations, the SCCCA was comfortable with the legislation approved by the House in early 2007 and supportive of the bill so long as amendments did not create an unlevel playing field for private providers. Opponents of the school choice movement, however, were fearful that the 4-K bill could be a vehicle for the controversial "Put Parents in Charge" voucher proposal and, in a preemptive effort, voted to send the bill to the Ways and Means Committee for "further review" of its financial implications. There has been no further discussion of the bill since then, but there is a concerted effort from child advocate groups and others to bring it back up for debate early in the new session.

Two critical components of a likely 4-K debate will include a report of the results of the pilot program from the Education Oversight Committee and the costs associated with maintaining or expanding the program in what is almost certain to be a belt-tightening budget year. Many child advocates and members of the larger business community are becoming very vocal in their support for a public-private 4-K initiative, citing it as a worthy early intervention measure that will help improve the state's unsatisfactory High School graduation rate. And while they claim the increased costs will be recouped many times over in long-term savings due to the larger societal costs associated with High School drop-outs, legislators will still be faced with an estimated price tag of

\$100-150 Million  
in new costs for a  
statewide initiative.



With many existing priorities, a new program of that cost and magnitude will be a difficult pill for legislators to swallow in an election year plagued by a budget shortfall anticipated to be as high as \$430 Million. That said, Legislators are painfully aware of Judge Cooper's ruling on the school funding equity law suit and the requirement that the state's neediest children be prepared to enter school ready to learn.

In addition to the 4-K debate, the SCCCA should be prepared to go proactive for the first time in a number of years, working in support of two important legislative initiatives. The first, H. 4090, introduced by Representative Nikki Haley (R-Lexington) seeks to expand the definition of child care facilities, effectively placing the same licensing requirements on 4-hour child care initiatives, such as after school programs or Karate Schools, that full-day providers must meet. This bill would require such programs to become licensed with the Department of Social Services, have employees undergo SLED background checks, and meet the safety and health requirements to which child care centers are held.

SCCCA believes it is critically important that the laws of our state are upgraded to protect the health and safety of children as parents continue to seek a variety of child care arrangements that meet their changing needs. Sadly, without appropriate protections, unlicensed facilities that are not required to perform background checks and take other similar precautions are easy targets for child predators and open the door to potentially dangerous situations in the very places where parents trust that their children are safe.

The second effort comes in response to the tragic deaths of children in two unlicensed and chronically troubled child care facilities last spring. This session, SCCCA will encourage the General Assembly to consider a bill making it a felony to knowingly and willfully operate a child care facility without a license. The proposed legislation would also significantly stiffen the penalties for owners or operators should a serious injury or death of a child occur at an unlawfully unlicensed child care center. While the vast majority of child care providers go to great lengths to ensure safe, healthy and nurturing environments for the children in their care, this legislation seeks to provide additional help to the Department of Social Services as they address the few bad actors that scoff at the law and refuse to comply with even minimal licensing and regulatory protections. Look for more information on both of these important efforts in the weeks and months ahead.

Finally, we are extremely proud that Shannon Erickson, now the immediate past-President of the SCCCA, has been elected as one of the newest members of the SC House of Representatives. Shannon won a hard-fought battle to represent House District 124, filling the unexpired term of now-Senator Catherine Ceips, who replaced Senator Scott Richardson when he was appointed Commissioner of Insurance. As a child care provider, small business owner, parent, and community activist (and all around great person!!), Shannon is well prepared to serve Beaufort County and the state of South Carolina as a member of our General Assembly. And while she will have a lot to learn as a new legislator – and much more on her plate than just child care issues – it will be great to have an advocate in the House who can address first hand the challenges and opportunities facing the child care industry in South Carolina. Congratulations and Best Wishes Representative Erickson.

\* \* \* \* \*

Welcome to our Newest Members!

Classy Kids  
Dawn Hamilton  
911 W. Georgia Road  
Simpsonville, SC 29680

Classy Kids  
Trina Painter  
1923 Sevier Street  
Greenville, SC 29609

Classy Kids  
Jennifer cox  
678 Fairview Road  
Simpsonville, SC 2968

Lowcountry Day Preschool  
Kim Clark  
357 Red Cedar Street  
Bluffton, SC 29910

Camp Lowcountry Day  
Kim Clark  
285 Red Cedar Street  
Bluffton, SC 29910

Bright Beginnings Day School  
Linda Harris  
410 Haynesworth Street  
Sumter, SC 29150

Hood Hargett & Associates  
John Harmon  
132 North McDowell Street  
Charlotte, NC 28204

Toddler University Learning Center  
Lesly Crick  
22 Northridge Plaza  
Hilton Head Island, SC 29926

Lakeshore Learning Materials  
Calvin Rice  
2695 E. Dominguez Street  
Carson, CA 90895

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thoroughly enjoyed my tenure as President of the SCCCA and thank the entire membership, all of my mentors, teachers, champions, coaches, and friends for their support, love and generosity. I am hoping that I have some legislative envelope pushing ahead of me and am counting on you all to keep me as grounded as ever! I will see you in Columbia during Legislative Session...especially SCCCA Legislative Day!

Shannon’s cell 843-263-1867 or email [erickson4@charter.net](mailto:erickson4@charter.net)

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### SUMTER SCHOOL GETS NEW NAME

#### Baby Bear Cottage to Become Archway Academy

Veteran Sumter childcare provider Baby Bear Cottage is adopting a new name to match its expanding services and core curriculum. Baby Bear Cottage will officially be known as Archway Academy.

“We needed a name that would convey the strong, caring foundation that we bring to early childhood education and also include our school age students,” said Tami Nix, who founded the company in 1985. Thanks to a solid emphasis on education rather than traditional daycare, Archway Academy has grown to encompass three locations, a summer camp and multiple programs for children ranging in age from six weeks to 12 years.

“This name change shows that the old Baby Bear Cottage is growing up, too,” said Holly Chase, mother of two boys who has been a part of the Baby Bear Cottage family for almost seven years. “The important thing for parents to know is that they’re working with the same great organization.”

The company’s newest location in Summerville opened in April 2007 under the new name.

# News from Washington

NCCA Board of Directors Meeting (October 3 – 5, 2007)

Submitted by Marie W. Darstein, NCCA Secretary and SC Delegate to the Board



**Hill Visits** – The Board of NCCA visited many key legislators who have submitted Pre-K bills. The main purpose of these visits

is to be a reminder that the public sector has offered quality early care and education for many years and would like to continue to do so as new initiatives are designed. Make sure you call your SC Congressmen and remind them of the same as bills come before the Senate and House.

South Carolina's elected officials in Washington are Jim DeMint and Lindsey Graham in the Senate and in the House, they are Henry E. Brown, 1st Congressional District; Joe Wilson, 2nd Congressional District; J. Gresham Barrett, 3rd Congressional District; Bob Inglis, 4th Congressional District; John M. Spratt, 5th Congressional District and James E. Clyburn, 6th Congressional District.

**E-News** – All members of SCCCA/NCCA should be receiving E-News which contains highlights of NCCA events.

**Model Policy Series** – NCCA is working on a Model Policy Series which has been, and will continue

to be, helpful as SC addresses different policy issues in ECE. This policy series includes 15-passenger buses, Unionization, Property Tax Reduction, CCBG Market Rate Studies and License Exempt Care.

**Six Principles** – NCCA's Six Principles of Quality Education has a web presence <http://www.nccapprinciples.org> Make sure you turn on your speakers for the full effect. This public policy debate endorses the following goals for Early Care and Education and is a reminder that for a child to be a lifelong learner, learning must begin from birth and not wait until four-years old.

**On-line Training** – NCCA is establishing a partnership with an on-line training provider. Watch for more details!

**Added Benefit** – NCCA is a member of the Early Care and Education Consortium (also based in Washington). Email updates from this group are forwarded as they are available.

**NAC** – NCCA offers a National Administrators Credential. SCCCA would like to offer this training for owners and directors in SC. If you are interested in more information, please email Karen Boyce at [kboyce@mgclaw.com](mailto:kboyce@mgclaw.com)

## Child Care Licensing Orientation Schedule

<http://www.state.sc.us/dss/cdclrs/orient.html>

The SC Department of Social Services offers an orientation schedule for newly licensed facilities at the above website. This orientation includes very basic information. If you would like to attend an orientation for existing facilities, please contact one of the following people: Linda Allen (Region 1, Greenville) 1-800-637-8550; April McDaniel (Region 2, Columbia) (803) 898-9001; Ella Gooden (Region 3, Charleston) 1-800-260-0211 or Peggy Wilson (Region 4, Florence) 1-800-464-9138.

**Editorial from Representative Shannon Erickson:**

As House District 124's new Representative, I was asked to visit the Beaufort Marine Institute recently. I was assigned two young men to take me on a tour of the camp. The conversation with one of them was the highlight of my day. You see BMI is a "boot camp" of sorts for boys ages 13 to 17 who have been given this last chance to change their ways. My tour guide was very articulate, told me he loved school and cooking, but offered freely that he had anger issues. He explained to me that in this "boot camp" you started with the lowest rank and moved up as you met goals that you and your counselors set. What he admitted to me shyly was that he was still at the lowest rank, because of what he termed "set-backs." He went on to say that he had advanced only to have situations arise that pushed him back, but that he felt he had turned a corner this past week and had his emotions much more in control. I listened intently, wondering if these words for my benefit, but hopeful for him that it was the real thing. We finished the tour of the camp and went our separate ways -- me to chat with the director and her advisory board and he to participate in the field day activities. A short while later, I overheard a counselor calling his name and asking him to come away from the tug-of-war, my ears perked up and I watched from afar as she curtly told him he could not participate due to a wrist injury earlier that week. He was visibly upset, with his mouth in a deep, furrowed frown, and arms hanging but fists clinched. I could not turn away, and as I watched, he told the counselor in a quiet voice "alright" then moved to the side. What I witnessed made me smile...he had turned those fists into counting fingers. He was silently counting to 10, utilizing a very simple strategy for working through his anger. He sat on a tree stump and watched his team win the battle, and I thought how he had definitely won one for himself.

Now, when you have a down and dirty day, don't hang your head. Think of children like this who are struggling to take their lives back. Use the strategies & resources available to you and keep trying!

P. S. They do in-depth profiles on these young men, but have not been asking about any early education & care....guess what....they are now. I'll keep you posted on that data.



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