

**MINUTES
CHLD DAY-CARE COUNCIL
JULY 18, 2002**

- Present:** Mrs. Sharon Jones, **Chair**; Mr. Norman Crumpton; Miss Elizabeth Dowdy, **Vice Chair**; Dr. Bethany Geldmaker; Mrs. Dona Huang, **Advisory**; Mrs. Kimberly Hulcher; Mrs. Nancy Ann Rogers; Ms. Carol Steele; Mrs. Deborah White, **Secretary**
- Absent:** Dr. Jane Craig; Mrs. Susan Custer; Ms. DeAnna Flanary; Mrs. Sondra Freeman; Mrs. Gail Johnson; Mrs. Lisa Shelburne; Mrs. Donna Thornton
- Staff:** Mrs. Paula Scott Dehetre, Ms. Arlene Kasper, Mr. Allen Wilson

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. The Chair stated that Mr. Allen Wilson, Assistant Attorney General, is researching whether the Child Day-Care Council can proceed with the promulgation of the regulation entitled *Minimum Standards for Background Checks for Licensed Child Day Centers* by submitting a revised, proposed package. In response to a suggestion to meet on July 30 to approve the Background Checks regulation, the Council agreed not to have a meeting on this day. The July 30 meeting date was ultimately changed to August 8.

Installation of Officers

The Chair installed Miss Elizabeth Dowdy as Vice Chair of the Council and Mrs. Deborah White as Secretary of the Council.

Chair's Report

The Chair reviewed correspondence received and sent. She also noted that the regulatory packages on the regulations entitled *Minimum Standards for Licensed Child Day Centers* and *General Procedures and Information for Licensure for Child Day Centers* have been reviewed by the Department of Planning and Budget and forwarded to the Secretary of Health and Human Resources.

Child Restraint Requirements During Transportation

Lieutenant Robert Northern from the Virginia Department of State Police explained that the law concerning use of child restraints during transportation of children was revised to require four-year-old and five-year-old children to be restrained. He reviewed the various exceptions to this law. The Department of State Police has requested a legal opinion from the Office of the Attorney General on two of the exceptions to this law. This request covers the definition of a bus and when a vehicle's interior design makes use

of a child restraint device impractical since the use of most booster seats requires use of both a lap belt and a shoulder belt. In response to questions, Lieutenant Northern stated that the law became effective July 1, 2002; the Virginia Department of State Police does not have authority to interpret the law except for enforcement purposes; enforcement entities include state and local law enforcement agencies; and the Department of State Police will share legal guidance once it is received.

Technical Assistance on Transporting Children

Mrs. Corri Miller-Hobbs, Virginia SAFE KIDS Coordinator, provided useful information on the use of child restraint devices during the transportation of children. She stated that it is important to consider the child's height and weight when selecting a child restraint device. She noted several options for properly restraining young children when only a lap belt is available. She suggested that child care providers work with a technician from one of the SAFE KIDS Coalitions since there are numerous types of vehicles and child restraint devices. In response to questions, Mrs. Miller-Hobbs stated that every dollar spent on child restraint devices results in a \$30 savings in medical expenses, however she did not know how many children had been injured during transportation in and out of child care.

Review of Regulatory Package on the Draft Regulation Entitled *Minimum Standards for Background Checks for Licensed Child Day Centers*

Mr. Norman Crumpton provided an update on revision of the Background Checks regulation. It was noted that the current regulation is being repealed and a new regulation is being promulgated. Changes made to the draft regulation include: incorporation of 2002 recodification changes; deletion of several definitions; addition of a new definition of "offense"; addition of manslaughter to the list of crimes; change in terminology from "background clearances" to "background checks"; incorporation of staff recommendations; moving a regulatory statement from a definition; assuring consistent use of "shall," "must" and "will"; deletion of 22 VAC 15-51-70 and changes for clarity.

The Chair appointed Miss Dowdy to the Background Checks Committee since she was the previous Chair of this committee. It was noted that the Town Hall document needs to be consistent with the draft regulation regarding background checks for board members and that there needs to be an exception for parent volunteers since this is stated in the law. Any grammatical changes should be forwarded to Miss Dowdy. The Background Checks Committee will meet from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on August 8.

Approval of Minutes

Approval of the June minutes was delayed since a quorum was not present.

Council Check-In

Ms. Carol Steele stated that it would be helpful to have information concerning the use of vans since it appears a bill on this topic will be introduced again during the next General Assembly session. Mrs. Sharon Jones suggested asking Delegate Morgan Griffith, the past sponsor of the bill concerning vans, to address the Council in the future.

Mrs. Dona Huang shared a poster on air quality that has been sent to child day center operators. In response to a question, Mrs. Huang stated that the information on the poster is available on the agency's website.

The Chair stated that she attended a graduation ceremony for teachers who have successfully completed a certification program.

Dr. Bethany Geldmaker stated that the Governor has established an advisory group concerning children in Virginia. Mrs. Jones noted that this could be an agenda item for a future meeting.

Trends and Updates in Child Care

The Chair provided an update on child care trends. She reviewed previous child care studies specific to Virginia. These studies made different recommendations regarding child care standards. The Chair also reviewed articles concerning:

- children's play that included the effect of television background noise and the relative lack of unstructured free play on children's play schemes and patterns;
- statistics relevant to child care such as the number of children and adults in certain age groups, number of working mothers and fertility rates;
- the positive effect of welfare reform on families;
- excluding sick children from child care, which indicated that most children with mild illnesses should not be excluded from child care;
- the top ten government issues affecting child care;
- children's aggressive behavior in kindergarten as correlated with attendance in child care programs; and
- characteristics of people with high self-esteem.

The Chair also shared two stories of child care programs impacted by the September 11, 2001 emergency situation. She noted the importance of emergency preparedness.

Public Comment Period

Dr. Jack Knapp, Executive Director of the Virginia Assembly of Independent Baptists, stated that in reference to the background checks regulation, a person should be considered innocent until proven guilty. He also stated that he was in favor of the law

requirement specifying when a board member of a center must get background checks. Dr. Knapp noted various objections to Delegate Morgan Griffith's bill concerning vans, which included the following: welding seats to cargo vans no longer occurs, it costs \$40,000 to replace a van with a bus, there is no proof of children being injured during transportation by public or private schools as a result of van use, and the marketplace will take care of safety issues.

Ms. Faustine Dye, Manager of the Child Day Care Financing Program at the Virginia Department of Business Assistance, shared that there is a loan program for child care providers.

T.E.A.C.H. - VA®

Dr. Suzanne Johnson, President of the Action Alliance for Virginia's Children and Youth, reviewed the T.E.A.C.H.® program as administered by the Action Alliance. This program helps child care providers obtain college course work leading to an associate degree. The program helps with tuition costs, books, travel, release time from work and bonus pay.

T.E.A.C.H.® originally started in North Carolina 10 years ago. The program has demonstrated decreased turnover in child care staff to less than 10%. T.E.A.C.H.® started in Virginia in September 2000 with two pilot sites but has now expanded to other areas of the state. Virginia is the seventeenth state to implement the T.E.A.C.H.® program and was the first state to operate the program with only private funds. In July 2002 the Action Alliance received \$300,000 in state funds (Child Care and Development Fund) for the program. Dr. Johnson invited the Council members to attend the next coalition meeting of the Action Alliance in October.

Child Care Industry Update

Mr. Vernon Holloman, Executive Director of the Proprietary Child Care Association of Virginia, reviewed numerous studies concerning child care in Virginia. He provided statistics from the studies that indicated the positive aspects of child care in Virginia.

Mr. Holloman expressed his concern with HB 460 (2002) concerning vans. He stated that there is no evidence that vans are unsafe when used properly; instead, the negligence of van drivers has resulted in accidents. Regarding the transportation law concerning child restraint devices, he stated that data does not support the need for changes to this law. The revision of this law was targeted at parents and he stated that he feels vans are school buses since there is no difference in use.

Mr. Holloman also expressed concern about the Department of Social Services using the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) guidelines to enforce playground

standards. He stated that following CPSC guidelines can be expensive and the vast majority of playground injuries occur when there is no staff supervision.

In response to a question, Mr. Holloman stated that the T.E.A.C.H.® program should be carefully reviewed since \$300,000 of taxpayers' money is supporting this program. He stated that the International Academy for Private Education has credentialed 1200 individuals working in child care. This program involves testing and is conducted at a low cost for the provider.

New Business

The Chair stated that she would send a card on behalf of the Council to Ms. Cynthia Clark, staff to the Child Day-Care Council; Ms. Clark's father passed away recently. Ms. Arlene Kasper noted that several, recent studies relevant to the regulation of child care were available for Council members who would like copies.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Prepared by: Arlene Kasper

Certified by: Deborah White _____
Date _____