



April, 2011

TAIMH News

Texas Association for Infant Mental Health

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Membership Satisfaction Survey

TAIMH is conducting a membership satisfaction survey. Please visit [this link](#) to complete the survey and be entered into a drawing to win a TAIMH tote bag!

Survey Ends May 31st!

Save the Date

January 6-7, 2012 - Infant Mental Health Advocacy Award and Conference featuring Dr. T. Berry Brazelton is coming back!

September 2011 - TAIMH Annual Meeting and Conference



TAIMH is on Facebook!
[Find Us Here!](#)

A Message from the Executive Director

As I write, the Texas Legislature is meeting to consider the funding and the activities of the state for the next 2 years. I am sure you have read the House Appropriations Committee's proposed budget for 2012-13 would drastically cut state services across the board-ECI, child abuse and neglect, health care, pre-kindergarten and the list goes on. I hope that our senators and representatives will take a more balanced approach and use the Rainy Day Fund and add new revenue. Texas is already at the bottom of states in most categories of child well-being so it is time to take out the umbrella- because it is raining.

TAIMH has been working on for the past 2 years to improve the care of babies in child care by speaking out at the agency and legislative level. Finally some good things are happening at the Legislature for children in child care. In this terrible budget year, we have to celebrate every victory.

- ◆ Senate Bill 264 by Zaffirini requires the local workforce boards to include quality indicators in public listings of local child care providers.
- ◆ Senate Bill 265 by Zaffirini defines who can provide training to employees and operators of child care facilities. Presently anyone can train providers.
- ◆ Senate Bill 260 by West is to be heard by Senate Health and Human Services Committee soon and hopefully will become law. It increases pre-service training hours from 8 to 24 and annual training hours from 15 to 24 hours. Directors would be required to have 30 hours instead of 20.
- ◆ Senate Bill 400 by Shapiro will allow child care providers who meet the Texas Rising Star Provider standards to purchase goods and services through the cooperative purchasing program administered by the state comptroller.
- ◆ House Bill 2269 by Strama is very complex, but it will improve the Texas Rising Star and child care system. It requires that workforce boards use at least 2% of their yearly state allocation for quality child care initiatives.

All these bills together will make a significant difference over time in the knowledge care givers have and the quality of care they provide to our most precious asset-Texas babies. I urge you to make time to thank these senators and representatives for working to improve child care.

Thanks for all you do for Texas children and their families,

Sincerely,

Susan Craven

A Note from the President

Ken Graves, Ph.D.

Almost all of us have been or soon will be affected by the economic crisis happening in our state and nation. In an effort to address this problem our legislators in Austin are proposing solutions that could have a significant negative impact on the lives of infants and toddlers in Texas. According to the Center for Public Policy Priorities the proposed 2012-2013 budget:

- ◆ would cut Medicaid rates for healthcare providers by 10%
- ◆ would eliminate or drastically cut Prekindergarten Early Start and Early Childhood School Readiness grants
- ◆ would not fund caseload growth in foster care or adoption subsidies; and would require other cuts to Family and Protective Services staffing

All these things represent threats to the social/emotional development of infants and toddlers.

According to the Texas KIDS COUNT Annual Data Book:

- ◆ Medicaid pays for over half of all Texas births and is the only source of coverage for children with serious disabilities
- ◆ Texas has the worst rate in the country of preschool children who are not read to regularly; and only about 8% of all three-year-olds participate in public prekindergarten programs.
- ◆ In 2009, more than 25,000 Texas children lived in foster care at some point during the year

While recent national health care reform has been positive for many young children in Texas; if the proposed changes to Medicaid are put into place it will likely cause a further decline in the already decreasing numbers of medical professionals who are serving the thousands of young children who receive Medicaid. Addressing physical health needs is part of the basic foundation for young children to experience healthy social/emotional development.

Preparedness for school has strong implications for how children progress for many years to come. We know that early preparation through early education is vital to their success. To jeopardize this opportunity for thousands of young children in Texas appears shortsighted and goes against much of what we know about preparing children for future academic success.

Nationally, infants and toddlers represent the largest number of children that appear before the courts for abuse and neglect; and represent one third of all children placed in foster care. Any proposed funding cuts to agencies charged with addressing these issues is cause for concern. Further, funding for prevention services in Texas has appeared to be a low priority in recent years.

As an organization whose mission is "to promote the healthy emotional development of infants and toddlers" we must do all that we can to address these issues and respond to these proposed changes. Contact your legislators to express any concerns you may have. Become involved in community efforts that seek to inform about the needs of our infants and toddlers. If such efforts are not present in your community, help to create them.

Many thousands of babies in Texas are counting on us.



A Word from the Education Coordinator

Sarah Crockett, MSW

Hello everyone! So much has happened since our last newsletter and I have many exciting things to report. First, I am excited to tell you that we have come a long way in systematizing and clarifying the endorsement system in Texas. I have rewritten/updated almost all of the endorsement documents, including the endorsement brochure, in an effort to make the process more transparent and easier to understand. The Endorsement System is meant to honor and recognize people working in a variety of settings for the work they do and the competence they have achieved in their professional roles. This includes all infant and family professionals, from the childcare providers who spend significant amounts of time raising Texas babies, to those who provide infant-parent psychotherapy to the most at-risk families in our communities. Each endorsement designation (level) has a different set of competencies associated with it, just as each profession has different responsibilities and plays different roles in the lives of babies. I have been working very hard to be clear that a person's work experience is the basis for their endorsement designation and I think this focus is beginning to come across clearly. I am happy to report that we have gained 3 new endorsees and 43 new applicants since our November newsletter, so endorsement is really growing.

I also want to let you know how TAIMH has become involved at the state level in major policymaking. I have been invited to join two sub-committees for the Texas Early Learning Council. The Texas Early Learning Council was created through the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, which required governors to designate or establish a state advisory council on early childhood education and care to improve the quality, availability, and coordination of services for children from birth to school entry. Texas received \$11.4 million over three years to comply with this Act. The Texas Early Learning Council currently has 5 core focus areas: a Statewide Needs Assessment with a focus on access to high quality early childhood

education and meeting needs of parents; a public awareness campaign launched around school readiness that targets families and early childhood education programs; a statewide professional development system; a collaboration and standards development; and an Integrated Early Childhood Data System. I am representing TAIMH and the 0-3 population on a sub-committee to develop a statewide professional development system, and on another sub-committee to develop Infant and Toddler Early Learning Guidelines for the state of Texas. Only a few people from across the state are working on these important issues, so it is an honor to be able to serve on these sub-committees on behalf of TAIMH.

I have also been working hard to increase TAIMH's involvement statewide and have had the wonderful opportunity to talk with each of TAIMH's chapter presidents to try to understand how to better support them. I hope we are moving in the right direction and I want to express my sincere desire to hear from each of you about how TAIMH can improve in its efforts to include all areas of the state in its activities. I trust that most of you have received the monthly training updates that we have been sending out. I hope you find those useful and informative about how many exciting trainings and events are happening across the state of Texas in infant mental health. Please send me any information you have about upcoming trainings or events in your area; I would love to help market them and support you in any way possible. I would really love to be a resource for each of you and to hear from you about ideas or concerns you have for TAIMH. Please contact me anytime at scrockett@taimh.org or call 512.550.9626.

Thanks so much for all of the important work you do and happy Spring!

Sarah Crockett

-Sarah

Upcoming Statewide Trainings

Tomball, Texas: Individualized Lesson Plans for Infants And Toddlers - May 14th 9am - 12pm at Tomball J.O.Y. School. (More Info: [Collaborative for Children Website](#))

Austin, Texas: Baby Connections Chapter Meeting May 18th 9-10:30am at Child Inc. (More Info: mary.sondgeroth@UnitedWayCapitalArea.org)

Austin, Texas: National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day. "Building Resiliency" May 3rd 11am-2pm at Seton Administration Offices ([Click Here for More Info](#))

Houston, Texas: Infant Mental Health Forum. May 2nd 12:30-1:30pm at DePelchin Children's Center ([Click here for More Info](#))

Dallas, Texas: EHS NRC PITC Home Visiting Institutes May 15-21st at The Adolphus ([Click Here for More Info](#))

Arlington, Texas: Texas Licensed Child Care Association Spring Conference May 20-21st at E.H. University Center ([Click Here for More Info](#))

Chapter Update

The Austin Chapter has approximately 20-30 attendees to each monthly meeting. In January the topic covered was "Emotion Coaching" which was presented by Carol Jackson, M. Ed., CFLE & LPC-I. February's presentation was titled "Cultural Diversity for Infants, Families & Professionals" and was co-presented by Stephanie Chandler, M.Ed., IMH-E (2) & Charlene Burgess, M.Ed. In March, Johanna Piña, EIS & LPC- Intern presented "A Brief Overview of Postpartum Depression". Our most recent training was given by June Yeatman, M.Ed. and titled "Caregiver Behaviors & Practices: Serving Infants, Toddlers & Their Families". We are looking forward to the upcoming presentation by Sonya Thorn, LCSW in May which will cover the various assessment tools used to evaluate infants and toddlers.

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