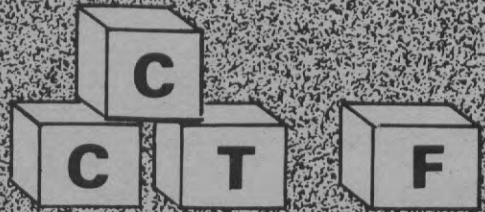


# BUILDING BLOCKS



Vol. 1, No. 10

A monthly newsletter published by the Child Care Task Force  
of the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference

November, 1974

## NEW DAY CARE REGULATIONS PROPOSED

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) has proposed some major revisions in licensing standards for Illinois day care centers and homes. The new regulations, which were issued by the licensing standards committee of DCFS' Statewide Advisory Committee on Day Care, include the following provisions for centers:

- The format for standards has been reorganized and clarified and includes specific compliance requirements for each standard.
- Public liability insurance is mandatory for children enrolled in a center. The standards require \$50,000 coverage per child and \$150,000 per occurrence.
- "Staff" are called "care-givers" and three levels of care-givers with specific responsibilities for each are given. Academic requirements for care-giver I (a director) and care-giver II (a head teacher) have been increased while work experience requirements have been lessened. For example, a care-giver I must have either 64 semester hours of college (including 6 hours of child development) or a high school diploma plus two years experience in care-giving plus 32 semester hours with 6 hours in child development. (Under the old standards a director is required to have 2 years of college or a high school diploma plus 3 years of experience.)
- New child/staff ratios have been established which increase the number of staff required for certain age groups. For example, the new standards require 1 staff for every 8 two to five year olds in an ordinary classroom situation. (Under the old standards 1 staff for every 10 three and four year olds is required.)
- In addition to new child/staff ratios, the revised standards establish "maximum group" sizes for center activities. For three to five year olds the maximum group size is 20 children. While the standards give an elaborate definition of a "group", this essentially means that a classroom can accommodate no more than 20 children for most program activities.
- The Plant and Equipment section contains standards in the new areas of sanitation, sewage, insect and rodent control, solid waste management, house-keeping and safety. Centers must also comply with the rules and regulations of the Illinois Department of Public Health, Environmental Protection Agency, Illinois Department of Labor, and State Fire Marshall's Office.
- The section on Organization and Administration details those facility policies and procedures that must be spelled out in writing to DCFS.
- The Services to Children section includes expanded commentary on nutrition, transportation, children with special needs, and school-age children. The section on care to children below two years has been removed.

The above is just a summary of many of the regulation changes. The state has already held one hearing in Chicago to find out what people think of the changes, but it looks as though another hearing will be set for either late

this year or early next to hear more comments and reactions from you, the affected centers. Meanwhile the Department of Children and Family Services will soon be sending copies of the proposed changes to all licensed centers and homes so that you will be able to study the changes for yourselves.

You should read through the new standards carefully, think about how they will affect you, and plan to state your views on them when the additional hearing is held. Or, contact the Child Care Task Force with your views and we will incorporate them into our testimony on the proposed standards.

#### HELPING CENTERS "WHIP INFLATION NOW"

President Ford's optimism notwithstanding, child care centers know only too well that whipping inflation is much easier said than done. Because they often operate on very tight budgets, many centers have been hard hit by skyrocketing costs: paper and sugar prices have increased 200%; the cost of art supplies and plastic goods made from petroleum by-products has soared; continually rising food prices strain the budgets of us all. To share ideas on how to fight inflation without sacrificing quality programs, *Building Blocks* offers these suggestions from several centers:

Paper Products. Use unbleached (brown) paper towels and unwrapped toilet paper. Use paper towels for children and reusable cloth towels for staff, especially in the kitchen. Substitute paper towels cut in half for napkins. Use heavy plastic glasses and silverware that can be washed and used again and again. (You can have volunteers wash the plastic goods or even have the older children do their own!)

Art Supplies. Make friends with a local printer and arrange to receive leftover paper. Call city and local newspapers to request leftover newsprint for painting and coloring. Cut up old magazines for collages and "books" as a substitute for construction paper. Use

powdered paint instead of liquid; to minimize loss, mix an entire can at once in a large container and cover it tightly.

Food. Bringing down the cost of food means making substitutions (e.g., soybean meat substitutes) and doing more work--but it's worth it! Make use of government subsidies--especially beans, which are a good source of protein. Avoid wasting food by having children with "eyes bigger than their stomachs" take small first portions; they can always come back for seconds. Use leftovers creatively--especially in casseroles and soups. Use powdered milk and refrigerate it for several hours before serving, or buy milk by the gallon instead of by the pint and use cups or glasses. You'll waste much less this way. Bake your own snacks, or ask parents to take turns providing homemade snacks once or twice a week. Keep an eye out for sales--one of the most effective ways of saving money on main meal and snack items.

The money you save may seem like only a drop in the bucket, but every little bit counts! Send us your ideas for coping with inflation, and we'll share them with our other readers in future issues of *Building Blocks*.

#### A NEW BUILDING BLOCKS FEATURE: HOW TO CHOOSE BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

*Children's books are an important mainstay of any center's curriculum. There are lots of good books for children (and many mediocre ones), but selecting the best and most interesting books for your center is not always easy. To help centers get the most out of their book budgets, Building Blocks asked Ann Smeltzer, an assistant editor at children's book publisher Albert Whitman Company, to put together a special series on "How to Choose Books for Children." The series will discuss topics like durability, length, illustration and subject matter of children's books and will include short reviews of new books and old standbys.*

## You Can Judge A Book By Its Cover

Before getting into what kind of story is right for pre-schoolers, it is important to consider what you should look for in buying any book which you expect to last more than a few hours in the hands of children. There are essentially three options: paperbacks, which are inexpensive but will not last long; trade editions (hardcovers), which are what bookstores sell; and library editions, which are trade editions with specially reinforced bindings. Library editions are the most durable and usually cost about 50 cents more than retail editions. However, not all publishers offer them.

It is possible to buy books which will last without buying the expensive library edition. The binding is the key. A good binding is stitched down the center seam and squeezes the pages tightly. If you open to the middle of the book and press the pages flat, you can check the stitching. Some publishers are cheating and gluing paperback books (no stitching) into covers to make them look like hardcover books. Beware! After you have checked for stitching, close the book and look at the cover along the gutter (indentation) which runs from top to bottom. If the cover is made of cardboard it will be brittle and crack when bent. Covers using cloth or clothlike material at the gutter are flexible and more durable. Although a hardcover, well-bound book is more expensive than a paperback, it may save money in the long run because it will last longer.

After deciding which books you would like to buy, you can get a discount on the retail price by ordering directly from the publisher. Many publishing companies offer a 25% discount, usually on trade editions, to schools and libraries (even small ones). To order from a publisher, you need the name of the book and the author. Write the company directly, preferably on center stationery. (You can find the addresses of publishers in Books in Print, available in libraries and bookstores, which lists all books

currently in print and their publishers.) Be sure to include a check or money order with your order.

(NEXT MONTH--How to assess length and illustrations in young children's books.)

## FESTIVAL OF CHILD CARE RESOURCES A SUCCESS!

Many thanks to all (150!) of you who attended the Festival of Child Care Resources, October 19! The Festival, which was sponsored by the Child Care Task Force and the Chicago Public Library, was the result of five months of cooperative effort, brainstorming, planning and meeting with the many resource groups, child care associations and service organizations that participated. The response from those attending the Festival was very enthusiastic and included several ideas for future Festivals. (If you have not yet returned the evaluation form, please do; we are interested in your comments.)

More than thirty Chicago-area organizations were represented at the Festival, which was designed to put child care center staff members in touch with free or low cost resource groups offering services which can be used to enrich center programming. The Chicago Public Library video-taped portions of the Festival for their video rental library; centers and other organizations can thus learn about the city's child care resources face-to-face. (Watch future issues of *Building Blocks* for information on borrowing the tapes.)

In conjunction with the Festival, the Child Care Task Force has published a "Directory of Child Care Resources," which describes sixty-five Chicago-area services--resources which center directors, teachers, parents and children should know about. Copies of the Directory will soon be available from the Task Force (1400 E. 53rd St., Chicago, Ill. 60615, 288-8343), probably at a cost of under \$2.00.

Again, thanks to everyone who helped make the Festival of Child Care Resources a success!

## AN OFFER YOU CAN'T REFUSE

Child care center groups can visit five of Chicago's top museums for the price of transportation alone--thanks to the Chicago Museum Ticket Plan sponsored by the Illinois Arts Council. Under the Plan, individuals and groups can obtain complimentary tickets to the Chicago Historical Society, which has displays on Chicago's history--past and present--and a "Touch Me" room for young children; the Museum of Contemporary Art, noted for its emphasis on current trends in art; the Art Institute of Chicago, which offers a wide variety of exhibits; the Field Museum of Natural History, which has recently developed a special program for pre-schoolers and their teachers; and the DuSable Museum of African American History, noted for its displays on the history of Black Americans. The Ticket Plan also offers, at no charge, large colorful posters on each museum.

Tickets are available at the Illinois Arts Council (111 N. Wabash, 60602, 793-3520), Urban Progress Centers, YMCAs and the Chicago Public Library (excluding the main branch). Call the Council for other pick-up locations and for public transportation routes to each museum.

## AROUND TOWN: EVENTS OF INTEREST

Fridays at the Educational Facilities Center (223 N. Michigan Ave.) are available for free in-service programs for teachers. To schedule an in-service day for your group, contact Joyce O'Donnel at 782-9422. The Center will also offer a series on "A Crafty Way To X-Mas." Topics include: Polyprint (Dec. 3); Crafts (Dec. 5); Paper Crafts (Dec. 10); Krimpart, Paper Sculpture (Dec. 12). Session run from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. Fee: \$2.00. Reservations necessary.

The Teacher Center will sponsor another in its series of workshops for staff of day care centers on Thursday, Nov. 21

at 4:00 p.m. Subject will be: The Needs of Young Children--how they are expressed, heard by teachers, and responded to. Other free workshops on Nov. 23 and Dec. 7. (1400 E. 53rd St., 955-1329).

The Illinois Council for Children With Learning Disabilities will sponsor sessions on Nov. 20 and Dec. 11 in three Chicago and suburban locations on the learning disabled child. All workshops free. For information, call 238-4619.

The Day Care Crisis Council of the Chicago Area will discuss the proposed revisions of state licensing standards (see Page one) at a noon meeting Nov. 21 at St. Vincent De Paul Center, 2145 N. Halsted. Mr. Glen Oltman of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services will speak. The meeting is free and open to the public.

The Black Child Development Association will hold a seminar on Dec. 7 on "Administration and Supervision: Team Building and Interpersonal Relations." Time will be 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., location not yet set. Contact Shirley Bowser, 285-2200.

---

## SUBSCRIBE NOW!

*Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$3.00 for a one-year (10 issues) subscription to Building Blocks, the monthly newsletter for Chicago child care centers. Mail to: Child Care Task Force, 1400 E. 53rd St., Chicago, Illinois, 60615.*

---

Name

---

Address

---

City, State, Zip