

American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Announces Development of National Early Childhood Education Competency Assessment

Consistent with the soaring demand for quality child care in the United States and recent brain research indicating that high quality child care and early education enhances later success, the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) announces the development of a national standards-based competency assessment measuring knowledge and skills in the area of early childhood education. The assessment is aligned with early childhood education related content standards, the National Career Clusters Initiative, and the National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education.

While developed for targeted use in secondary family and consumer sciences programs teaching early childhood education, the assessment has application in a broad range of education, community development, staff development, and human resource settings. Adhering to gold standards for effective testing, the computer-based assessment provides a mechanism for competency measurement, program accountability, and program improvement. Successful testing will qualify individuals for recognition and documentation through a corresponding early childhood education pre-professional certification.

Developed by National Early Childhood Education Leaders

AAFCS has engaged the assistance of a broad range of esteemed early childhood practitioners and educators from across the nation to assist in assessment development. Recognizing the value of a solid assessment tool in assuring that programs are effectively preparing individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to provide high quality child care in an optimal environment and for pre-professional careers requiring those skills, the following stakeholders participated on the development panel for the assessment and certification:

- Peggy Thoenen, Buttons and Bullfrogs Family Center, Jefferson City, MO
- Jean Simpson, Office of Head Start, Washington, DC
- Barbara Sawyer, National Association of Family Child Care, Arvada, CO
- Sara Moleski-Rice, National Child Care Association, Washington, DC
- Alison Lutton, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Washington, DC
- Celia Farr, Children's Harbor, Portsmouth, VA
- Sabrina Thomson, Faith-Based Child Care organization, Oklahoma City, OK
- Susan Hoff, Child Care Group, Dallas, TX
- Robin Hasslen, Head of Child Development Centers, Bethel University, St. Paul, MN
- John Anne Reynolds, South Plains College, Levelland, TX
- Eleanor Keppler, FCS Teacher and Child Care Center Director; IN
- Vicki Rexroat, Oklahoma Department of Career Tech and Child Care Director, Fort Cobb, OK

Assessment Launch and Further Information

The Early Childhood Education assessment and certification is part of a portfolio of pre-professional level assessment and industry-recognized certification products currently under development by AAFCS and will be available for use during 2009-10. For further information please contact: Lori Myers; Director of Pre-Professional Assessment and Certification; 703-706-4600; LMyers@aafcs.org; www.aafcs.org.

The American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) national organization has a proud 100-year history of providing support and leadership for family and consumer sciences professionals. AAFCS has a well-established credentialing program that includes accreditation of university programs, professional level assessments, and certification of professionals as Certified in Family and Consumer Sciences (CFCS). AAFCS is committed to utilizing its resources and considerable grass roots network of members and other stakeholders to launch the new program with pre-professional assessments and certifications.

