

WORTHY WAGE  
CHILD CARE JOB SHADOW  
TOOL KIT

written by  
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Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition

for the  
**National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force  
Worthy Wage Campaign**

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## Introduction

In 1977, a group of child care teachers in the San Francisco Bay Area were concerned about the low pay and status of their work. So concerned, in fact, that they formed an organization, the Child Care Employee Project. This organization grew over the years, advocating for change in the child care system throughout the country. Relocating its offices to Washington, DC, the CCEP became the National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force (NCECW). NCECW is the nation's leading advocate for upgrading the compensation and training of child care teachers and providers. We are working to create a unified and powerful voice for the child care work force, advocating for fair and decent employment for caregivers and reliable, affordable, high-quality care for families.

NCECW is also the national coordinator for the Worthy Wage Campaign, a grassroots effort to mobilize child care workers to fight for solutions for the child care staffing crisis. The campaign activity began in 1991, and has found tremendous support across the country. The creativity and resourceful nature of early childhood professionals has spawned exciting events and activities over the years of the campaign. There have been marches and rallies; training seminars bringing together providers, parents, business leaders, and legislators; media campaigns including the use of billboards to broadcast the message; and planned and coordinated shut-downs of child care facilities which have coalesced people around the issue.

Many local campaigns plan to hold a *Child Care Job Shadow* activity on Worthy Wage Day, April 27, 1995. We therefore have asked the Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition to share with you its *Child Care Job Shadow Day* experience last year. Over the years, teachers, directors and providers have found ways to bring parents, business leaders, and legislators into the classroom. These have proven to be extremely successful in reaching the visitors with the message that quality child care is hard work which requires trained and well-compensated professionals. The *Job Shadow Day* was unique in its statewide approach, its coordinated media effort, and its unqualified success, and its relative simplicity. NCECW hopes this tool kit helps you plan your participation in the *National Child Care Job Shadow Day* in 1995, in addition to your other Worthy Wage Day activities.

*National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force*

# PRINCIPLES OF THE WORTHY WAGE CAMPAIGN

- Create a unified voice for the concerns of the early care and education work force at the national, state and local levels
  - Promote activities that empower child care teachers, providers, administrators, and teacher educators to take a leadership role in the transformation of early care and education to an economically viable and socially respected profession
  - Give teachers and providers a voice in all aspects of the planning and delivery of the services they provide
- Increase the value and respect for those who provide early care and education through improving their wages, benefits, working conditions, and training opportunities
  - Compensate early care and education staff at levels commensurate with the skill and value of the important work they perform without regard to age grouping or program setting
  - Develop accessible, affordable training opportunities to improve service and to ensure that the early care and education work force reflects the diverse linguistic and cultural population it serves
- Work collaboratively with others to promote the accessibility and affordability of high quality early care and education options that meet the diverse needs of children and families
  - Establish standards that reflect the best current knowledge regarding child development and developmentally appropriate education
  - Increase public funding with priority given to improving existing early care and education programs (for all age groups and a variety of settings including Head Start, family child care and center-based programs) over expanding the supply of mediocre care
  - Recognize and incorporate the cultural, linguistic, and economic diversity of our communities in all early care and education options.

## *Child Care Job Shadow Day*

### ***A Step by Step How-We-Did-It . . .***

### **(So you can do it too!)**

#### **Introduction**

The **Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition (MWWC)** became an affiliate of the **National Worthy Wage Coalition** in November 1993. We were interested in doing a statewide **Worthy Wage Day** activity which would involve as many participants as we could recruit. We had five months to organize an event, while simultaneously building our membership and then supporting it. We had to consider several things about Michigan's atmosphere as regards child care:

*Legislative mood* - Just about the first recommendation that came out of Governor John Engler's administration when it came into office in January 1991 was to abolish the Division of Child Day Care Licensing. Due to a groundswell of support, parents and child advocates were able to change his mind about the importance of licensing and regulation. However, the political mood in the state was changed from a positive mood in the previous administration to a negative mood in this one. Child care was not thought to be an important legislative issue. A lot of work needed to be done to win over many of the legislators.

*Previous Worthy Wage activity* - While there had been some positive **Worthy Wage Day** activity in Metro Detroit in 1993, there had been either no activity or some negative feelings in other geographic areas. There was a great deal of skepticism as to whether or not it was worthwhile to be a part of this campaign. From within the child care profession, there were serious misconceptions as to what was the purpose and meaning of the **National Worthy Wage Campaign**. There was a lot of work needed here also to win over a segment of skeptical child care professionals. We needed to enlist as many positive thinking professionals as possible.

*Child advocacy network* - Fortunately, Michigan has a very strong and active child advocacy network. There was easy opportunity to build alliances with Michigan AEYC members, Michigan 4C affiliates, health and human service organizations, and legislative offices. This would allow us to spread the word - and work - of whatever we planned to do.

The reason for listing the above areas of concern is to demonstrate how complicated it can be to plan an activity that will suit your needs and be flexible enough to encourage participation by most of your target group. We needed to analyze what we had going for (and against) us in Michigan. As you read through the description of *Child Care Job Shadow Day*, think

about the challenges you are facing in your own area, in your state, in your field. You need to tailor this event to bring you the largest reward it can. To do this, you need to be honest with yourself about the problems you anticipate facing, and where you can look for success.

You should also be aware that with only a few months of planning, we pulled off a very positive event which has given us lasting relationships with legislators, with the business community, with the press, and most importantly, with our members.

### **What is a *Child Care Job Shadow Day*?**

Many Chambers of Commerce have an annual activity when corporate executives invite high school students to "shadow" them for a day of working side-by-side in the corporate setting. In other words, a day of reality therapy. We felt this would be an eye-opening experience for many people who have never set foot in a child care facility, while the action was in full swing. We invited local decision makers - corporate, political, community - to work along side providers for the day. Our *Child Care Job Shadow Day* would allow a guest to experience a child care setting and meet some providers, children and parents in their natural environment.

The purpose of this event was to demonstrate in a hands-on manner the working environment for child care providers, the arduous nature of their work, the responsibility that they hold, and to very clearly demonstrate that this is NOT BABYSITTING!

Our event was phenomenally successful. We were able to include 17 individuals of various occupations and backgrounds in facilities in five counties in Michigan. The list included:

- Stephen Yokich, VP & Director, UAW General Motors Dept., International Union, UAW
- Neal Shine, Publisher, Detroit Free Press, and Vickie Elmer, Business Editor, Detroit Free Press
- Harold Lewis, President & CEO of Childtime Children's Centers
- Three state representatives and one state senator (who was a gubernatorial candidate as well)
- Two city mayors, a county commissioner, a township trustee, a judge and a county prosecutor
- Jerry Robbins, Dean of Eastern Michigan University School of Education and Jim Vick, Assistant VP, Student Affairs, EMU (who shadowed in their on-campus center)
- Cynthia Wilbanks, President, Michigan's Children (child advocacy organization)

The activity resulted in two radio interviews, two features on the evening business report on a leading Detroit area television station, and numerous print articles. In short, it caused many people to view this issue in a new and exciting light - as a business issue!

The *Child Care Job Shadow Day* is a very fun and exciting event for all parties concerned. If you plan thoroughly, think your objectives through, and decide you can have a good time with this activity, you will be successful. The **MWWC** took the following as our attitude: *In some areas, it will be wildly successful. In some areas, it will be mildly successful. And in some areas, it will flop.* We set our sights realistically and then went forth with solid determination and made child care a priority for people who usually don't think about it as an all-encompassing issue. The most important thing you can do that will make the event successful is to have a VERY POSITIVE AND ENTHUSIASTIC ATTITUDE! If you don't believe it will work, it won't. But on the other hand.....

## Planning for Your *Child Care Job Shadow Day*

I. **The Choice** - Spending a day in a child care setting is not going to be the top priority for a decision maker, unless you help to make it a priority. Once you decide that you do want to invite someone to shadow you, begin a wish list of folks you could invite.

- Are there any local CEOs who have children in your center? Does your center have any business partners? Are you a member of the local Chamber of Commerce and have access to these leaders? Kiwanis International has made a commitment to focus many of their activities on the well-being of children.

- Elected officials - such as your mayor, city council member, city manager, school board member, senator or representative - may see this as an opportunity to garner the attention of a voting constituency. Don't forget the *opinion leaders* as well - this includes special assignment reporters, news directors, editors, religious leaders, and others who shape public opinion.

- If you are fortunate enough to have a media or sports personality as a parent in your center, why not consider him or her?

- Who presents themselves as friends to child care and children?

- Does anyone "owe" the field? Have you "caught" someone or some corporation using the word *babysitter* inappropriately? Has a reporter inaccurately portrayed child care?

- Do you have a friend in the media, someone who covers child care or children's issues with accuracy and sensitivity?

If you are organizing the event, you will need to consider a range of settings to be visited. Be sure to include family home care, school-age care, university or vocational school based care, and child care centers. The question inevitably comes up, "How can you be sure the shadows will see quality care?" The **MWWC** felt that only quality settings would involve

themselves in this activity. It would allow us to show off the cream of the crop. It is doubtful that substandard providers will want to involve visitors and the media in their program, as they are probably not in a position to be favorably viewed from the outside. Spread the word of the activity through your family day care and directors' groups and associations.

**Things to Consider:**

You may need to do what is called "backwards thinking" - instead of thinking about what *you* need to get out of the project, think about what *participants* will get out of it. What do they need to hear? What do you need to say to be heard? Think about the political and economic implications of doing a job shadow. Are you in an area with little priority on children's issues? Do you need to view this from a business stance - that quality child care is a bottom-line issue for business, now and in the future? Be careful to set yourself up for success in marketing your project.

**II. The Invitation** - If you want to have someone job shadow on **Worthy Wage Day**, you need to approach them *early*. You should call or use your personal contact to inform and invite the person of your choice. If he or she is not available on that date, you can ask them to come another time. **In order for this to be a statewide action, try to get as many as possible participating on the same day.** *Numbers of participants* is what will bring media attention to the event. If legislators will be in session on **Worthy Wage Day**, they can still get media attention by participating the day prior. And you might encourage media to cover it before the actual day, so as to make it easier to have footage to put "in the can" and get on the air on **Worthy Wage Day!** In any event, set a specific time period for participation, so as to best alert the news. How about any time during the **Week of the Young Child**? Once you find a willing participant who will find this to be fun and enlightening, draw up a formal invitation. You might want to hand-deliver this, taking along some children or even just some children's artwork. Should your invitee be a little reluctant to participate - *barter!* Offer to do a free parent education "Brown Bag" lunch session. This should be of value to the company or office, and you might be able to encourage the trade of time a little better this way. If your shadow cannot spend the entire day with you, try for the morning. It is important that they see the parents dropping off their children.

Be sure to keep the National Worthy Wage Coalition abreast of what you are doing *as you are going along!* NCECW will be working with you to help draw national media attention to this activity. **Please send in copies of your invitations, press release, informational pieces - whatever!** **FLOOD THE OFFICE WITH YOUR INFORMATION!** This is the only way in which they can know what *you* are doing in your area! Also, feel free to call them if you want samples of what others are doing in 1995.

### Things to Consider:

It may take a few tries to get someone to participate. And you may strike out several times before finding someone who not only wants to participate, but is also available. Widen your search at the beginning. Do you need to involve one of your board members? What about the local school board? How about a school superintendent? Or the man who runs the local print shop? You don't always to think in terms of high profile. In advertising sales, there is a saying that to do effective sales, you need to have Patience, Persistence, & Perseverance. While you may be lucky on your first invitation, *DON'T GIVE UP* if the first few tries fail. Consider this a challenge!

**III. The Media** - Ask the shadow if he or she has a PR (public relations) person with whom you should be dealing. You need to have the most up-to-date information on **Worthy Wage Day** activities, as well as statistical data for your state. The local Worthy Wage Coalition can act as a central point to distribute this. *(Note: One thing that did help our event be successful is that we coordinated it out of a statewide office. Local 4C directors were especially helpful in coordinating their own areas, and then passing the information and activities along to the MWWC. This statewide approach was very effective in terms of getting the "big guys & gals" to listen to us.)* In addition to working with the shadow's press person, you can call on all of your contacts in the media to alert them to this event. It is your responsibility to help get the media to pay attention! No media is too small or too large! *(By the way, the 1994 Child Care Job Shadow in Michigan was slated to be covered by CNN - except that Dr. Jack Kevorkian went on trial the same day in Detroit! Sometimes you can get so close to glory - and then there is a change in the news schedule. But close feels good too!)*

In addition to April 27, 1995 being the fourth annual **National Worthy Wage Day**, it is also **Take Our Daughters To Work Day**. The two campaigns work well together, as they speak to the issues of children and business - *in the same breath!* Find ways to work together with local organizers. If you feel that the competition for media attention or corporate participation might be too great on April 27th, *plan your shadowing activity to occur prior to that date!* Remember, there is much flexibility in this activity, and the idea is to get a good deal of media and business participation.

### Things to Consider:

An effective approach to media may hinge on your presenting this as a newsworthy activity. Reporters may not be interested in child care, but they may be interested in labor issues. In Michigan, we had business reporters working with us because of the different spin on a human services issue. Use your "backward thinking", and don't be shy about insisting that this be covered as a business issue. Local beat reporters may be responsive, and you may find easier success with local media. However, this is a major market issue - especially in 1995, with your event putting a local spin on a national activity.



**IV. The Child Care Job Shadow Day** - In your invitation and discussions, decide how much time the shadow will be with you. Encourage him or her to spend as much time as possible, most closely resembling your average day. Be sure to advise that dress be casual - in case a toilet overflows, or some noses are runny that day! Encourage the shadow to be ready to participate and have fun, and to talk with the teachers, aides, cook, bus driver, parents - *and children*. If you have some of the shadow's employees as parents at the center, invite the parents to come to lunch to discuss the importance of consistent and quality care for their children (out of courtesy, be sure to let the shadow know ahead of time that these parents will be joining you). Don't bombard the shadow with negativism - but do be sure that some *realistic* information is exchanged. Don't forget to take pictures! Again, if your shadow cannot stay for the entire day, encourage him or her to be there for the morning, when parents are leaving their children.

You might find it helpful in coordination of the event to meet with the providers as a group to discuss what you have in mind to be accomplished. Furnish them with appropriate materials. Also, contact the shadows prior to the day with information about the site, about what to look for in quality care, and what will be expected of them. And be sure that your staff and parents are aware of what you are doing, how it is being done, and why you are participating in this action.

**Things to Consider:**

If you are expecting media coverage, BE SURE TO HAVE SIGNED PHOTO RELEASES FROM THE PARENTS! If there are any children who are *not* to be photographed or filmed, keep them in a separate area. One *Job Shadow* site had a child whose parent did not want her to be filmed for custody reasons slip before the television camera. Fortunately the mother was reasonable about the error, as the little girl was on the news for only a split second.

**V. The Information to Be Shared** - You should have a packet of information for the shadow to have on hand during the day, as well as to take back to work with him or her. This information should have the stats of your center, a profile of your staff, feedback from parents as to their need for children to be in safe care while they are working, and any other relevant information. The local **Worthy Wage Coalition** may be able to provide copies of articles on wages and compensation for our field as well. You might prepare a ceremonial check for a day's work to be given to your shadow at the end of the work day, to graphically illustrate how low the salaries are. Why not put it in an inexpensive frame so it can be mounted on the wall?

The mock check was a high point at each site. The providers loved the mock check they were provided by the MWWC, the shadows truly got the picture, and it was a great photo op!

Neal Shine, Detroit Free Press publisher, thought the check for \$4.58 was real and wanted to sign it back to the center!

#### Things to Consider:

Be sure to present your child care information in a professional manner. Loose in an envelope will never do! Use a pocket folder or tabbed manila folder (with your coalition name or facility name and logo on the tab) for easy, businesslike presentation of materials. Remember that most of these shadows work in offices, and they are used to having materials given to them in a neat fashion. The presentation does not have to be expensive, just clean and neat.

**V. The "Buy-In"** - Before the visit, try to arrange time to brief the shadow on the facts. (If that isn't convenient, you can share information at the end of the shadow's visit.) During the visit, you have your shadow involved with the kids, your staff had a chance to demonstrate their work to the shadow, and the parents have had lunch with you and your shadow. Everyone has had a good time, and the shadow seems receptive to your views. Now is the time to close the deal, make the sale, get the buy-in - in other words, you now have the opportunity to take the shadow aside and really talk about the issues. Be sure to plan for some quiet time to talk at the end of the visit. Most of you will find very sympathetic and now enlightened listeners. In the packet of materials you sent prior to the visit, you should have included a set of the **Principles of the Worthy Wage Campaign**. Bring those out again now, for your shadow to sign. Ask the shadow to become a member of your coalition, or to make an in-kind corporate contribution. Remember these two things as you steel yourself to ask for commitment: 1) the active participation by the shadow indicates a certain level of buy-in and support for the cause; and 2) the shadow has not been asked for anything but time up until this point - *there is nothing wrong with asking for more help as long as you are asking for something doable and reasonable!*

#### Things to Consider:

One of the intangibles your coalition will gain is *currency* - not necessarily hard cold cash, but in-kind contributions, media exposure, good reputation, access to corporations and legislators, and the like. For instance, if your shadow is a newspaper editor, why not ask to do a weekly or monthly article on quality child care issues? The relationship you will build with your shadow will be extremely useful to you over the year. In Michigan, we have seen an incredible amount of positive child care coverage since our activity. The press and the legislators contact us for information!

**VI. The Follow-Up** - Be sure to send a thank you note to your shadow for his or her participation IMMEDIATELY! Again, this is a nice place to add some artwork from the children. Send copies of photos you took and articles which were printed in the paper. Contact and thank any of the reporters who picked up on your story. This is a great way to publicize your program while celebrating **Worthy Wage Day**.

Consider having a debriefing session with participants on the child care side of the event. It is important to gather their impressions while they are fresh, so that you can reflect on them for your 1996 *Child Care Job Shadow Day!*

### **What did the MWWC "get" out of the *Job Shadow Day*?**

- ➔ We pulled off a statewide activity.
- ➔ We got the attention of the media, and now have relationships with reporters, as well as print articles and video clips we can use to further our goals.
- ➔ We gained access to the business community and more access to the legislators.
- ➔ We established our coalition as a "mover and shaker", as poised for action.
- ➔ We built up our membership, and built up their self-esteem.
- ➔ We accomplished what we set out to do - develop a statewide, nonthreatening activity which would be newsworthy.

## Some Afterthoughts....

It is one thing to read a how-to manual, and it is another to talk with the people who participated in an activity. For that reason, here are some of the thoughts from the debriefing of the 1994 MWWC *Job Shadow Day* participants:

*Nancy Korte, Director, Epoch Child Care Center - Shadow: Neal Shine, Publisher, Detroit Free Press*

"Even though it took several tries to find someone who could be available to shadow me, I kept trying until I found someone who I felt was a good match for my center. There were many benefits to participating. Worthy wages is of paramount concern, and we at Epoch are committed to help make a change. Mr. Shine spent the morning at my center, participating in group time, serving snack, assisting some children with the computer, and overall he had an eye-opening experience. The wage issue was being addressed in a positive manner. Also, we had great media exposure, with television reports filmed here (twice). We also involved our parents, giving them Worthy Wage buttons which they wore through April. We are already working on next year's shadow possibilities. Maybe with the collaboration of peers, parents, politicians, and business leaders, change can be a reality!"

*Jennie McAlpine, Executive Director, Washtenaw Regional 4C, & MWWC Planning Committee Member*

"In 1993 and 1994, the Washtenaw Regional 4C, a resource and referral agency, served as the lead agency in local activities celebrating Worthy Wage Day. The involvement of R&R offices in such community events can be an indispensable tool for worthy wage coalitions for many reasons. In our case, the most important advantages were: established contacts with many sectors of the community, relationships with the media, contacts with parents and providers, and staff time or practicum/intern students. These resources allowed us to coordinate and facilitate the Job Shadow event, as well as other efforts. We helped form local alliances which opened the doors for providers and directors. Resource and referral agencies have a vested interest in seeing the field of child care advance professionally. Their mission usually focuses on the development of accessible, affordable, quality child care. To that end, they are a critical ally in the Worthy Wage efforts to educate the public, and to win popular support for better working conditions in the field."

*Leslie de Pietro, Program Coordinator, University of Michigan Family Resource Care Program, & MWWC Planning Committee Member*

"At first I was skeptical of Job Shadow Day. I wasn't sure it would catch on in our community. Washtenaw County had experienced a very divisive introduction to the wage issue several years ago. In 1993, we had very little participation in our Worthy Wage Day activities.

I doubted strongly that we could get any involvement and cooperation around the shadowing. Was I ever wrong! It was a big hit here - with more shadows in Washtenaw County than any other county! The enthusiasm and media coverage was tremendous. We couldn't have asked for better publicity for the Worthy Wage movement."

*Wendy Shepherd, Coordinator, Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition*

"The Job Shadow activity met all of our expectations, and exceeded our goals. We set our sites realistically, and enlisted as much help as we could to pull off a broad yet defined event. It was much easier to do than we had anticipated, and the flexibility allowed for people to participate at their own level of comfort. In looking for one specific thing to stress, I would have to say that the media coverage was fabulous. It is very important to help the reporters do their job - give them meaningful materials, which are accurate and easy to follow. The shadows enjoyed that as well, because the materials brought them up to speed. Throughout the planning, I kept reminding the committee (and myself) of the saying, "Good things happen to those who wait - GREAT things happen to those who get off their butts and go for it!"

## SAMPLES OF TOOLS FOR USE WITH CHILD CARE JOB SHADOW DAY

Most of the following materials were prepared on a Macintosh computer. WordPerfect was used for the word processing program. Filemaker Pro was used for data base management Aldus Pagemaker was used for the graphic work. Please contact Wendy Shepherd (Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition - 810/624-3689) for details if you would like copies of any of these samples on disk.

**Fact Sheet** - This was sent to all participating parties: with invitation letters, media kits, to legislators, to center directors, in shadow information packets.

**Michigan Worthy Wage Summary** - This sample is an updated version. We sent this out with the Fact Sheets.

**16 Ways You Can Help Improve Michigan's Child Care** - This piece was designed after a reporter asked us, "What can I tell my readers they can do, now that I have their attention?" Make sure you have some action suggestions like this for your media folks.

**Invitation to Shadow** - The basic letter was kept on computer, with details personalized for each shadow. A copy was also sent to the provider who would be the host.

**Letter to Provider** - As with invitation, this basic letter was kept on computer and personalized. It allowed us to be sure that we had communicated all the relevant details in writing.

**Press Release** - This was actually the second press release. A press advisory had been sent out earlier in the month, before the details were all set. It is important to have your press releases present as professionally as possible. Many press releases come across reporters'

desks every day. Make sure that yours stands out for its well-done appearance!

**Testimonial Quotes** - We sent these quotes along with the press releases. It was helpful to have the participants speak on their own behalf. This also allowed the press to use some canned "sound bites".

**Shadow Schedule for Press** - This list was essential for our coordination of not only the media, but of ourselves! The area coordinators had everyone's phone numbers and schedules, and this reduced the amount of paperwork we had to generate. The media appreciated having this list to help them plan their coverage.

**Sample Check** - Each provider was given a check for her shadow. She figured out the wages based on the shadow's experience (some were given credit for being grandparents!) and wrote out the check.

**Clippings Sheet** - This collage of articles now accompanies responses for requests for information and our press releases. It is helpful because it is an obvious validation of child care as a business issue.

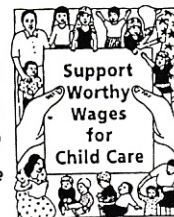
**Samples of Press Coverage of Job Shadow Day** - Here are just a couple of the articles which were written.

## Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition

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Child Care Professionals Working For Change



### **FACT SHEET**

#### **Effects of Low Wages and Compensation of Child Care Staff on the Quality of Care in Michigan**

CONTACTS FOR MORE INFORMATION: Wendy Shepherd-Bates, Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition (810/624-3689) and Margaret Crawley, Michigan 4C Association and the Michigan Child Care Task Force (517/351-4171)

- Child care/early childhood education is an important public policy issue. In 1990, 58.2 percent of American mothers with children under the age of 6 were in the labor force.
- There are approximately 32,000 child care providers in licensed or registered child care facilities in Michigan.
- The supply and quality of early childhood programs are compromised by the difficulty in attracting and retaining qualified employees. The inadequate compensation, low status, and poor working conditions in the child care field are the primary reasons for this.
- Teaching staff in child care setting earn exceptionally low wages compared to other, often less educated and trained members of the civilian labor force. Teaching staff subsidizes quality care by way of these lower salaries. *Hourly average wage in Metro Detroit centers was less than \$6.50 in 1992.*<sup>1</sup>
- Despite exposure to illness on the job, the overwhelming majority of centers offer teaching staff no or limited health insurance. *Only 14% of Metro Detroit centers offered fully paid health benefits to teaching staff in 1992.*<sup>1</sup>
- Turnover of teaching staff is high, threatening the ability of centers to offer consistent services to children. *Metro Detroit centers had an annual turnover rate (1991-92) of 33%, with a four-year turnover rate (1988-92) of 69%.*<sup>1</sup>
- There is ample evidence that the quality of care received by children is directly related to the training of the providers. The issue of continued training of child care/early childhood education staff is, therefore, extremely important.
- Working poor families pay a disproportionate amount of their income for child care over more affluent families. The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (*Monthly Labor Review*) found that working poor mothers with a family income of \$132/week paid 26.3% (\$30) of income in child care costs. Working nonpoor mothers (\$629/week) paid 8.2% (\$40). It is not economically feasible for many poor families to be employed outside of the home without assistance with child care.
- **KIDS COUNT in Michigan** reports the proportion of annual income Michigan low-income families pay for one child in full-time care ranges from 25%-50%, based on family type and income level.

<sup>1</sup>These comments and statistics represent the findings of the *National Child Care Staff Study, 1992*, conducted by the Child Care Employee Project (Oakland, California).

Resources: Bureau of Labor Statistics; *Child Care and Early Childhood Education in Michigan*, KIDS COUNT in Michigan Report; *Child-care Problems: An Obstacle to Work*, *Monthly Labor Review*, October 1991; Michigan Community Coordinated Child Care (4C) Association; National Association for the Education of Young Children; *National Child Care Staffing Study, 1992*.

**Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition**  
*A Summary of Activities ~ July 1993 - November 1994*

**Formation of Local Affiliate**

November 1993 - Became one of the first formal affiliates of the National Worthy Wage Coalition, under the new national membership structure

**Membership**

As of 11/28/94, membership of nearly 200, representing many areas of the state and many sectors of interested individuals.

**Publications**

*MWWC Update*: published 5 times (newsletter)

*Worthy Wage Tool Kit*: published in March 1994 (manual)

*16 Ways You Can Improve Michigan's Child Care*: published in April 1994 (brochure)

**Presentations**

MiAEYC Annual Conference, 3/25/94

Metro Detroit AEYC Annual Conference, 10/15/94

Community Caring for Healthy Sharing Conference, 11/5/94

*Scheduled:*

National AEYC Conference, 12/94

MiAEYC Annual Conference, 3/95

**Actions**

Job Shadow Day (17 participating "shadows"), which is the model for the National Worthy Wage Day Job Shadow Activity

Distribution of information to House

& Senate on Kids at the Capitol Day, Lansing, 4/27/94  
Michigan Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 479  
Testimony at CCDBG Hearing, Lansing, 6/1/94  
Candidates' Survey, produced with the Michigan 4C Association, 9/94

**Media**

*Radio:*

Ann Arbor: Commentary, WUOM (April 1994)

Ypsilanti: Interview, WEMU (April 1994)

*TV:*

Detroit: WDIV *Business Beat* reports (3/30/94 & 4/21/94)

*Print:*

Action Alert (Working Women's Project newsletter)

Ann Arbor News

The Beacon (MiAEYC Newsletter)

Better Homes & Centers (pub. of the DSS, Div. of Child Day Care Licensing)

The Bulletin (MDAEYC newsletter)

Canton Eagle

Canton Observer

Crain's Detroit Business

The D.C.H.A. Dispatch (Day Care

Homes Assn. of Washtenaw County newsletter)

Detroit Free Press

The Detroit News

Macomb Daily

Observer & Eccentric (Livonia)



Coalition, Michigan Community Coordinated Child Care Association, Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children, Michigan Coalition for Children and Families, Michigan League for Human Services, and Michigan's Children.

- Don't ever refer to child care as *babysitting*, or to the provider as a *babysitter*.
- Pay for professional memberships, subscriptions to professional journals or magazines, resource books for the provider as a show of appreciation for his or her work.
- **Investigate & invest** in providers in the area. Seek out and support quality providers.
- Get involved with the MWWC Job Shadow Day on *National Worthy Wage Day* each year!

For more information about how to get involved, contact:

Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition  
1420 Spruce Drive  
Walled Lake, MI 48390-1543  
phone: 810/624-3689



Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition  
1420 Spruce Drive  
Walled Lake, MI 48390-1543  
Child Care Professionals Working For Change



### What constitutes quality child care?

This is an easy question to ask, but a complicated question to answer. There are many components of high quality care, including state enforced licensing and regulation standards. Michigan is fortunate to have some of the best licensing and regulation standards in America.

However, without child care providers who are trained and skilled in child development and early education, quality child care cannot exist. Unfortunately too many child care professionals earn too little money for the very hard and important work they perform. The National Child Care Staffing Study (1992) found that the average hourly wage for center-based caregivers in over forty Metro Detroit sites was less than \$6.50. Only 14% of the centers provided any kind of health benefits. Annual staff turnover was 33%, with a four year turnover of 69%. The average for a US business nationally is less than 9% turnover in one year. This turnover of caregivers is very detrimental to the intellectual, social and emotional growth of infants and young children.

It is no wonder that it is difficult for parents to find quality child care which is affordable. The following are some steps you can take to begin finding solutions to this crisis.

### Some Small But Important Steps...

- Rethink the priority placed on child care as a monthly expense, compared to costs for cars, homes, food, entertainment.
- Discuss wages, compensation, turnover with caregiver or director.
- Be sure to utilize all assistance for child care costs - employer dependent care assistance plans (pretax dollars), Earned Income Tax Credit, IRS Child and Dependent Care Credit.
- Host a parent meeting where the director or provider can share budget concerns, and look collectively for some in-kind solutions to add more money to salaries.
- Learn what it takes to provide high quality care - programming and staffing, as well as money.
- Share a percentage of an annual bonus with caregivers.
- Rethink how a caregiver's role and respect are perceived. Caregivers are the people to whom children are entrusted while parents are at school or work.



## 16 Ways You Can Help Improve Michigan's Child Care

Practical & Easy Suggestions for



Parents  
Employers  
Advocates  
Legislators  
City  
Officials  
Labor  
& Others

compiled by the  
Michigan Worthy Wage  
Coalition

April 1994

- Encourage local officials (commissioners, councils, mayors, zoning boards) to rethink how they view caregivers in terms of service to the community. Accessible child care - both center-based and family day care homes - enhances a community where many parents work.
- Contact your state and national legislators about prioritizing funding for child care in our state and in our country. We need to maximize the available state and federal dollars for child care. We need to better utilize available federal matching funds and block grants. We need to think about how much it costs child care providers to operate, in small business expenses for operation of sites, and we need to find incentives which encourage operation of quality child care sites.
- Support high licensing and regulation standards, and invest in enough licensing staff to perform the work needed.
- Private sector investment needs to be encouraged by the state, with tax breaks or matching funds, for grants to sites for staffing or facility needs. This has worked well in other states.
- Work with child care advocacy organizations, such as the Michigan Worthy Wage

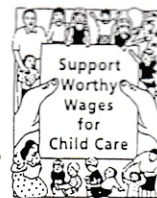


## Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition

1420 Spruce Drive • Walled Lake, MI • 48390-1543

Phone/Fax 810.624.3689

*Child Care Professionals Working For Change*



November 16, 1994

Mr. Neal Shine  
Publisher  
Detroit Free Press  
321 W. Lafayette  
Detroit, MI 48226

Dear Mr. Shine:

I was pleased to be asked to send you a formal invitation to participate in a first-of-its-kind activity next week. This is actually a follow-up and reinforcement of an invitation made to you via Julie Topping by Nancy Korte, of Epoch Child Care (located on Jefferson).

April 21st is National Worthy Wage Day. This is a day when we ask the public to pay attention to the real crisis in child care - the incredible turnover of staff due to low wages and compensation. This issue has garnered much national attention over the past two years, with special reports on ABC news, NBC news, the Wall Street Journal, New York Times, Detroit Free Press, and other local and national publications. Jennifer Moore, WDIV, has begun this year's coverage of the issue with a story on the March 30th *Business Beat* report. Vickie Elmer ran an excellent article on the subject in the Free Press on April 12th. Metro Detroit was included in a four-year study of working conditions in child care centers (a summary is enclosed for your review). The Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition was formed in November 1993, and our membership grows daily. We have created a new way to focus attention on Worthy Wage Day. We are calling it our Child Care Job Shadow Day. We are asking you to join us in this event.

All over Michigan, business and community leaders will be "shadowing" child care directors and family day care home providers for all or part of Thursday, April 21st. Some who are unable to participate on the 21st will be shadowing other days that week. They will actually work in the setting, and will experience child care from a new perspective. They will learn that child care is labor intensive and begin to understand that the staff deserves a worthy wage. We have commitments for statewide participation from various elected officials, some labor leaders, some corporation representatives, and we would enjoy your participation as well.

Mr. Shine, I urge you to consider participation. The Detroit Free Press has been very supportive of the Worthy Wage Campaign with clear and positive articles last year. The *Children First* campaign frequently cites the need for high quality child care. As a leader in the business and local community, you understand how your participation could bring visibility to our efforts. I understand the importance of a leader getting personally involved in local activities, and I also understand how many requests for participation in events you must receive.

I urge you to consider that the issue of wages and compensation is not only a child care issue, or working women's issue. It is a work force issue. Child care businesses are, in fact, small businesses. Large and small businesses alike need high quality, consistent child care to be in operation to allow working families to stay employed, thus impacting our current work force. Our region's future work force - the children today - need the stability of consistent care while their parents work. Poor quality child care, like inadequate parenting, produces less than desirable citizens. Michigan needs child care, and Michigan needs the highest quality child care.

We would like to have you "shadow" Nancy Korte at Epoch Child Care, which is right downtown and has shown faith in the city by remaining there, and remaining in business. If you only have an hour any day between now and the 21st, that would be enough. You needn't commit to a full day.

I will look forward with talking with you or your staff on this request soon. We would welcome your participation in our long-range goal of bettering the working conditions for many Michigan citizens.

Sincerely,

Wendy Shepherd-Bates  
Coordinator

encs.

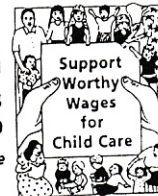
cc: Nancy Korte, Epoch Child Care

## Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition

1420 Spruce Drive • Walled Lake, MI • 48390-1543

Phone/Fax 810.624.3689

Child Care Professionals Working For Change



November 16, 1994

Nancy Royal  
Curious Child  
43600 Garfield  
Clinton Twp., MI 48038

Dear Nancy:

Thank you again for agreeing to be a site for Sharon Gire's *Worthy Wage Job Shadow* experience on Monday, April 18, from 9:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. I especially appreciate your participation, since you were "drafted"! I am enclosing some background information on the Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition for you, including a complimentary *Worthy Wage Tool Kit*, as a thank-you for being a host site. Representative Gire's aide's name is Julie Chalgian (517/373-0159), if you need to contact her directly.

You will also find information about the *Worthy Wage Job Shadow Day*. The main focus of the event is to increase awareness of the nature of child care work. We are using this format to raise public awareness all over Michigan, from April 15th through April 21st. Jennifer Moore, WDIV-TV Detroit, began our press coverage on March 30th with a segment on the evening **Business Beat**. The Detroit Free Press will have an article by Vickie Elmer in its Business Section on April 12th. We look forward to continued positive coverage statewide.

The mock check enclosed is for your use in "paying" Sharon Gire. Please fill it out with her pay at the rate of your aides, for the time worked. Some people are giving these out in frames as mementos. You may also give her one of the piggy banks - the other is for you! In the *Tool Kit* you will find a reporting form, near the back. Please use this to let us know how things went for you. Also, if you have any newspaper articles printed about it, please send copies to me. PLEASE NOTE: IF YOU ANTICIPATE SOME PRESS COVERAGE, YOU MIGHT HAVE PARENTS SIGN RELEASE/CONSENT FORMS FOR THEIR CHILDREN TO BE PHOTOGRAPHED OR FILMED.

On April 27th, we will be visiting the legislators in Lansing with information about the Coalition and about the issues facing our members (as well as non-members who are child care providers). If you would like to join us in these visits, please call me or Mark Sullivan (800-950-4171).

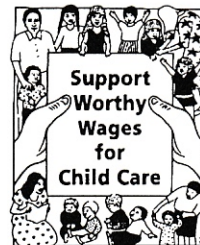
Thank you again, Nancy, for your cooperation. I look forward to hearing from you after the visit. Again, don't hesitate to call if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions.

Sincerely,

Wendy Shepherd-Bates  
Coordinator

encs.

**Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition**  
1420 Spruce Drive • Walled Lake, MI • 48390-1543  
Phone/Fax 810.624.3689



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

CONTACT: Wendy Shepherd-Bates, MWWC, 810-624-3689  
Mark Sullivan, Michigan 4C Association, 517-351-4171

***COMMUNITY LEADERS THROUGHOUT MICHIGAN REALIZE THAT  
NAPTIME IS OVER!***

Beginning on Friday, April 15th through Thursday, April 21st, community leaders throughout Michigan will be working in child care settings, for free. They will be participating in the **Job Shadow Day** sponsored by the **Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition**. Working along side the child care professionals who are helping to shape our state's youngest citizens, these leaders will be taking time out of their busy schedules to acknowledge the importance of this work.

Participants in the **Job Shadow Day** will learn what quality child care looks like. They will experience first hand the demands put on child care professionals, and they will see how children benefit from quality care. They will understand that not just anyone can take care of children, that quality care is certainly not to be confused with babysitting. Child care is labor intensive, is intensive labor, requires training, and child care workers deserve a living wage.

The participants range from county commissioners, mayors, and elected officials to newspaper reporters, judges, and prosecutors. "I am participating to show my support of child care workers and to shed light on the need to better compensate their work," states participant Representative Sharon Gire, Chair of the House Human Services and Children Committee. "Every day child care workers take on the responsibility of caring for our most valuable assets. Nothing is more important, and they should be compensated accordingly." Other community leaders participating are: UAW Vice-president Stephen Yokich, Detroit Free Press publisher Neal Shine, Senator Debbie Stabenow, Representative Lyn Bankes, Representative Mary Schroer, Mayor Ingrid Sheldon (Ann Arbor), Mayor Jean Stein (Troy), Judge Betty Widgeon, Eastern Michigan University Dean Jerry Robbins.

A recent national study conducting research in Metro Detroit child care centers found that the average hourly wage for trained, college-educated teachers and directors was less than \$6.50. Benefits are minimal, if present at all. Opportunities for advancement are not always present in a given job situation, and many people trained to be early childhood educators find that they must abandon the field to obtain a living wage elsewhere.

The Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition, established in 1993, feels that the **Job Shadow Day** will be an enlightening experience for all who participate. The day coincides with the third annual National Worthy Wage Day. For more information about how to become involved in **Job Shadow Day** or about the Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition's other activities, please contact Wendy Shepherd-Bates, MWWC Coordinator, at 810-624-3689, or Mark Sullivan, Michigan 4C Association, 517-351-4171.

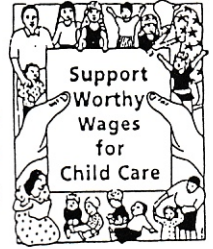
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## Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition

1420 Spruce Drive • Walled Lake, MI • 48390-1543

Phone/Fax 810.624.3689

*Child Care Professionals Working For Change*



### ***JOB SHADOWS ANSWER THE QUESTION: "WHY TAKE THE TIME TO WORK WITH A CHILD CARE PROVIDER ON JOB SHADOW DAY?"***

Nearly twenty very busy people are taking a few hours out of their schedules to participate in the Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition's *Child Care Job Shadow Day* this week. Some of them would like you to know why:

Lyn Bankes, State Representative, Chair of the House Republican Task Force on Child Care:

"Events like this help us to focus on the importance of quality, safe, affordable child care. It remains a top priority for working parents. When sufficient child care is available, absenteeism is reduced, turnover is decreased and morale is enhanced. If Michigan residents desire a quality, affordable, safe child care system, it will require financial commitment. By making a sufficient investment now, the state will reap dividends in the future. Our children are our most precious resource, and child care providers deserve to be compensated for the tremendous responsibilities they have and the important work they do every day.

Sharon Gire, State Representative, Chair of the House Human Services and Children Committee:

"I am participating to show my support of child care workers and to shed light on the need to better compensate their work. Every day child care workers take on the responsibility of caring for our most valuable assets. Nothing is more important, and they should be compensated accordingly."

Debbie Stabenow, State Senator:

"Our children are the future of this country. We need our best and brightest to care for them. I'm proud to be a part of Job Shadow Day to honor and recognize the role of hard-working child-care workers who invest in our future every day."

Stephen Yokich, UAW Vice-President:

"I welcome this opportunity to experience first-hand the environment in which many dedicated child care workers provide high quality care to Detroit area youngsters. Quality day care is a critical step towards a positive direction for our young people. It doesn't come about by accident, and that's why child care staff should be treated as the professionals that they are and be paid good wages they deserve. Our union fully supports the long term goal of the Worthy Wage Campaign of rights, raises and respect for child care workers."

**Confirmed Job Shadow Schedule - as of 11/16/94**

County	Date	Name	Site / Director	Address / Phone	MWWC Contact
Oakland	4/07	Vickie Elmer, Business Editor, Detroit Free Press	Family Day Care Home Cheryl Taylor	Pontiac	Wendy Shepherd-Bates
Washtenaw	4/14 1:15 - 3:15	Jim Vick, Assistant VP, Student Affairs, EMU	Eastern MI Univ. Children's Institute Lindy Buch	Snow Health Center, Ypsilanti 313/487-1126	Jennie McAlpine
Wayne	4/15 2:30 - 4:30	Representative Lyn Bankes	The Learning Tree Child Care Center Carol Tresik	9501 Henry Ruff, Livonia 313/525-5767	Wendy Shepherd-Bates
Macomb	4/18 9:30 - 11:30	Representative Sharon Gire	Curious Child Nancy Royal	43600 Garfield, Clinton Twp. 810/286-5430	Wendy Shepherd-Bates
Washtenaw	4/19 TBA	Commissioner Barbara Bergman	UoM Hospital Child Care Center Marsha Knessi	2601 Glazier Way, Ann Arbor 313/998-6195	Jennie McAlpine
Washtenaw	4/20 8:00 - 9:00	Mayor Ingrid Sheldon, City of Ann Arbor	Discovery Center Debbie Deltzen	775 S. Maple, Ann Arbor 313/663-7496	Jennie McAlpine
Wayne	4/21 10:00 - 11:00	Harold Lewis, President & CEO - Childtime Children's Centers	Childtime Children's Center Jennie Rumberger	3101 N. Lilley Road, Canton 313/981-3222	Wendy Shepherd-Bates
Washtenaw	4/21 11:00 - 1:00	Prosecutor Brian Mackey, Washtenaw County	Early Learning Center Carolyn Tyson	2309 Packard Rd., Ann Arbor 313/994-4245	Jennie McAlpine
Ingham	4/21 12:00 - 1:00	Senator Debbie Stabenow	Pam's Preschool Pam Eaton Champion	4312 S. Logan, Lansing 517/394-2333	Mark Sullivan
Washtenaw	4/21 4:00 - 5:30	Representative Mary Schroer	Chelsea Community Hospital Child Care Ctr. Kathy Young	14600 Old US 12, Chelsea 313/745-1311	Jennie McAlpine
Washtenaw	4/21 8:00 - 11:30	Judge Betty Wigdeon	First Step Care	2790 N. Maple Rd., Ann Arbor 313/665-9838	Jennie McAlpine
Washtenaw	4/21 8:30 - 11:30	Cynthia Wilbanks, President, Michigan's Children	Community Day Care Trudi Hagen	1611 Westminster, Ann Arbor 313/761-7101	Jennie McAlpine
Oakland	4/21 9:00 - 10:00	Harold Lewis, President & CEO - Childtime Children's Centers	Childtime Children's Center Cyndi Younkin	150 E. Long Lake, Troy 810/528-1780	Wendy Shepherd-Bates
Wayne	4/21 9:00 - 10:00	Neal Shine, Publisher, Detroit Free Press	Epoch Child Care Center Nancy Korte	1534 East Jefferson, Detroit 313/259-5115	Wendy Shepherd-Bates
Oakland	4/21 9:00 - 11:00	Mayor Jean Stein, City of Troy	Childtime Children's Center Cyndi Younkin	150 E. Long Lake, Troy 810/528-1780	Wendy Shepherd-Bates
Wayne	4/21 9:00 - 11:00	Melissa McLaughlin, Canton Trustee	Childtime Children's Center Jennie Rumberger	3101 N. Lilley Road, Canton 313/981-3222	Wendy Shepherd-Bates
Oakland	4/21 9:30 - 11:30	Stephen P. Yokich, VP & Director, UAW General Motors Dept., International Union, UAW	Kresge Early Childhood Program Carol Garofalo	16130 Northland Dr., Southfield 810/443-2233	Wendy Shepherd-Bates
Washtenaw	4/26 9:00 - 11:00	Dean Jerry Robbins, EMU School of Education	Eastern MI Univ. Children's Institute Lindy Buch	Snow Health Center, Ypsilanti 313/487-1126	Jennie McAlpine

Michigan Worthy Wage Contacts: Jennie McAlpine (Washtenaw County) - 313/761-6040;  
Wendy Shepherd-Bates (Oakland, Macomb, Wayne Counties) - 810/624-3689 Mark Sullivan (Ingham County) - 517/351-4171

42194

**Epoch Child Care Center, Inc.**

1534 East Jefferson  
Detroit, MI 48207  
313 / 259-5115



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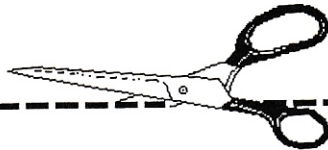
DOLLARS

PAY  
TO THE  
ORDER OF \_\_\_\_\_

Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition  
1420 Spruce Drive • Walled Lake, MI 48390-1542  
810 / 624-3689  
*Child Care Professionals Working for Change*

FOR \_\_\_\_\_

This check was designed on Aldus Pagemaker. Every provider participating in the activity was given a copy personalized with site information. This was then completed by hand for the shadow and presented by the provider at the end of the visit.



# Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition News Clippings



Carol Taylor, Jean Larson, William Gilman and Cheryl DeWitt with their students. Taylor serves for all children in her home in Farmington Hills.

## THE DAY-CARE DEFICIT

Many child care providers, taking care of precious assets, earn low wages

Child care workers at least 10 hours a day in their homes, around town and in day care centers. The Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition is a coalition of parents, teachers, and child care workers who are fighting for better wages and working conditions for child care workers.



VICKIE ELMER

Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition is a coalition of parents, teachers, and child care workers who are fighting for better wages and working conditions for child care workers.

## BUSINESS

Detroit Free Press

### Fighting the day-care

Many child-care providers earn low wages

Child care workers at least 10 hours a day in their homes, around town and in day care centers. The Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition is a coalition of parents, teachers, and child care workers who are fighting for better wages and working conditions for child care workers.

## ESSAY

### Day care is labor of love, illness and sacrifice

By Amy Krauss Roy

The Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition held its Job Shadow Day two weeks ago that consisted of political child-care workers around for a day. The idea was to give these workers a window on what day-care workers go through, often for little more than minimum wage.



Roy: Conditions are tough once a child-care worker for 10 months while living in Grand Rapids.

## DAY-CARE

continued from PAGE 8

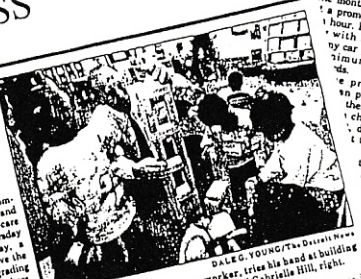
in the first year than previously thought and that sensory experiences before the age of three determine the number of brain cells and cell connections the child will have as an adult.

## The Detroit News Business

### Day-care workers deserve better pay, unionist says

A firsthand experience: Yokich of the UAW works for \$4.50 an hour in Southfield center.

Yokich was one of a dozen community leaders, legislators and mayors who worked the state Thursday across the state Thursday to mark Worthy Wage Day, a five-year campaign to improve the quality of child care in the state.



DALE G. YOKICH OF THE UAW LEFT, AND GABRIELLE HILL, RIGHT, IN HIS ROLE AS A CHILD-CARE WORKER, TRIES HIS HAND AT BUILDING BLOCKS WITH ANGELINA NWOAGWONA.

Yokich, in his role as a child-care worker, tries his hand at building blocks with Angelina Nwoagwona, left, and Gabrielle Hill, right.

Tuesday, May 10, 1994



Harder Than It Looks — College of Education Dean Jerry Robbins found out what a day shadow event at the Rackham Building is like April 26 when he participated in a "Job Shadow Child" event at the Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition.

FRIDAY APRIL 22, 1994

FOCUS EMU



# BUSINESS

Detroit Free Press

## Fighting the day-care deficit

Many child-care providers earn low wages

CHILD-CARE, from Page 1C

Of course, higher wages for child-care providers — never call them babysitters — will hit low-income women hardest, but those women often already pay the least, Chaplin says.

Child care is so physically demanding, so emotionally demanding — we owe them a lot," says Paulette Chaplin, executive director of the Child Care Council of Oakland County.

Because of the high demands and low wages, Chaplin says about half of all family day-care providers leave the business every year. Many quit to get another job — one with better pay and benefits.

Child-care advocates seek average wages of \$10 an hour — almost double what some make now — plus health care coverage for child-care workers by 2000.

And they're right. Child-care workers really do deserve and more support, more respect and more money, mother-teachering women.

Women have never been more so active of each other, through mentoring, professional organizations and patronizing women-owned businesses. It's time we support providers who make our work lives possible by caring for our children or our employees' children.

Women's wages have been increasing in recent years, especially compared to men's. We must work together individually to see that our own children go to good schools, think of child-care costs as something only Mommy pays.

Even if you're not a parent of a young child, you can help. Corporate leaders can help child-care subsidies, and employers can help with programs or tax abatements. They can donate legal, printing and other services or grants through their country clubs — coordinated child care council office. And they can help employers with children learn about available resources.

### WAYS TO SHOW YOU CARE

Here are some simple things you can do to support raises and respect for child-care providers:

- If she hasn't asked for a raise in a year, give your child-care provider a raise. It needn't be huge — 50 cents an hour — but make it clear it's because you value her contribution to your children and your work life.
- Pay on time and the full amount.
- Remember your child-care professional on special occasions — her birthday and Mother's Day. A card, some flowers, a subscription to a professional journal or a new book for children will show you value her.
- Support the cause by getting a 40-page "Worthy Wage Tool Kit." It is \$6.50 plus \$2 for shipping, available through Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition, 1420 Spence Drive, Walllet Lake 48390. Worthy Wage kits cost \$1, plus shipping.
- At a day-care center, talk to the director about wages and turnover. Help plan a parents meeting to discuss solutions and creative approaches to better care.
- Write elected officials to support quality child care. For example, write Gov. John Engler at Olds Plaza Building, P.O. Box 30013, Lansing 48909, and tell him you value licensed child-care since he is considering abolishing it.
- If you're seeking more information on child care or the Worthy Wage campaign, contact by calling Sherry St. John at 800-850-4171 or 624-3689 anytime.



CHERYL TAYLOR CARES FOR SIX CHILDREN IN HER HOME IN PONTIAC. DARRYL DURHAM CARES FOR FIVE.

# THE DAY-CARE DEFICIT



**VICKIE ELMER**  
Women at work



Supplies are organized and marked in Cheryl Taylor's Pontiac home.

Many child care providers, taking care of precious assets, earn low wages

Cheryl Taylor works at least 10 hours a day as a cook, teacher, special friend and more. She makes breakfast, lunch and two snacks a day for her six charges. She takes them to the zoo, parks and state fairs, and throws each child a birthday party. She teaches them ABCs, numbers and colors. Add in story time, playing outside, occasional trips to the store and helping children to drink their milk.

"It's a pretty busy day, trying to squeeze it all in," she says.

For all this, she earned about \$12,000 last year. Her expenses, at her family day care in her Pontiac home, amount to \$2,210 a week — less than \$6 a day. She could earn more delivering pizzas than working for young children.

Few women in day care earn more — and they're almost all women. The average pay for black

day-care providers is around \$8,000, after expenses. At day-care centers, teachers earned \$15,500 on average, assistants \$8,900.

Most providers do not get paid holidays, vacation, sick days or health-care coverage. Many depend on their husbands' income to pay family expenses.

No wonder there's a "Worthy Wage" campaign later this month. On Worthy Wage Day, April 21, child-care advocates will speak up for the need for better pay and more respect. The day is sponsored by the Worthy Wage Coalition and the National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force.

In Michigan, advocates will pair up politicians and

see CHILDCARE, Page 2C

# Day-care workers deserve better pay, unionist says

■ **A firsthand experience:** Yokich of the UAW works for \$4.50 an hour in Southfield center.

By Helen Fogel

THE DETROIT NEWS

United Auto Workers Vice-President Stephen P. Yokich makes about \$42 an hour running the union's General Motors department.

But Thursday morning, he worked for \$4.50 an hour at the Salvation Army's Kresge Early Childhood Program in Southfield. After two hours of taking care of active 3- and 4-year-olds, Yokich received \$9 in pay — an average rate for a beginning day-care worker.

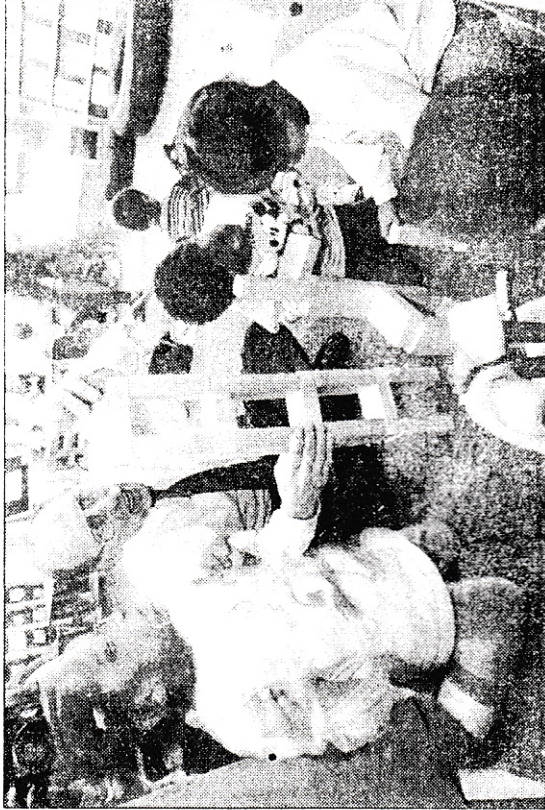
"I wouldn't do this for \$5 an hour," Yokich said. "I wouldn't do this for \$10 an hour. We have to look at what we are paying these folks. ...

"Child care should be a given, like education and health care. In most industrial nations this is a regular government program."

Yokich was one of a dozen community leaders, legislators and mayors who worked in day-care centers across the state Thursday to mark Worthy Wage Day, a five-year campaign to improve the quality of child care by upgrading the status of the industry's workers.

Although millions of Americans trust their children with child-care workers, they are among the lowest paid workers in the country. The Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition said:

- The average wage for Michigan's 35,000 child care providers is \$6 an hour, although many have college degrees and special training. Nationally, the most experienced workers earn about \$15,000 a year.
- Only 27 percent of the nation's centers provide health insurance for their workers.
- Turnover approaches 33 percent a year, and more than 90 percent in four years, although psychologists



DALE G. YOUNG/The Detroit News

Yokich, in his role as a child-care worker, tries his hand at building blocks with Angelina Nwogunson, left, and Gabrielle Hill, right.

say preschool children need long-term stable care by the same individual for healthy development.

Day-care center operators say they are stretched thin trying to provide enough workers and cover their costs, while keeping care affordable for parents.

Theresa Swalec, director of Assumption Nursery School & Toddler Center in St. Clair Shores, said workers are paid hourly, but rates depend on experience. An employee

with a four-year college degree in child development would start at about \$7.50 per hour. A college student working as an assistant might start at \$4.50 per hour.

"A big portion of our budget is for insurance," she said.

Most working parents can't afford the kind of child care they want and really need for their children, said coalition spokeswoman Wendy Shepherd-Bates. "This is a societal problem. We should regard all the children as our children," she said.

# ORDER FORM



written by  
Wendy Shepherd  
Michigan Worthy Wage Coalition

for the  
National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force  
Worthy Wage Campaign

Please send me a Worthy Wage Job Shadow Tool Kit! My check payable to NCECW for \$5.00 is enclosed.

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