

**ARKANSAS 21C NETWORK MEETING  
LITTLE ROCK, AR**

**MARCH 1, 2005**

**SUMMARY**

The Arkansas 21C Network held its meeting on March 1, with representatives from 27 of the 28 current 21C programs. Several guests who may be interested in implementing 21C in their districts/programs also joined the group.

**Update from the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education**

Tonya Russell provided a legislative update related to preschool items and information about the ABC program and potential new funds. She complimented AR21C programs on their work, as demonstrated by the AR21C evaluation. She also discussed collaboration and the potential to work with the regional Head Start conference. Feel free to contact Tonya at 501-682-4895 if you have any questions.

**Bullying**

Norma Meek provided an overview of bullying and some ways to work with this international issue; we need to listen and ask children how they feel. The three types of bullying are verbal, physical, and relational.

We have all played the roles of bully, victim, and witness. Bullies can be identified by the way they act, not necessarily the way they look. When bullies realize that others fear them, then the situation escalates. Victims can be just about anyone. Bystanders are also a large group; they are afraid to get involved. These are the people who can be changed; they can be taught how to help the victim leave the bully and de-escalate the situation. Adults in the community need to take some responsibility to make a safe environment for children. Teachers need in-service training and to act as role models, particularly in the atmosphere we set and the way we talk with each other.

*Don't Laugh at Me*, is a program ([www.dontlaugh.org](http://www.dontlaugh.org)) with a book and CD (by Steve Seskin) that is available for free from Operation Respect. Some references: *Bullyproofing your School*; *Bullies, Bullied and Bystanders*; and *Odd Girl Out*.

**Dolly Parton Imagination Library**

Randi Connier described this program, that is provided throughout Marion county for children from birth to age 5. This program was started in 1996 by Dolly Parton and expanded in 1999 to become a national effort. It costs \$30/year to provide a monthly book that comes to the family at home. In Yellville, it currently reaches 300 children, funded by donations from local groups, Title I (parent involvement) and private benefactors. Surveys from three of the Dolly Parton communities

indicated that it changed parent-child interactions, gave the child a sense of importance, and increased family literacy.

### **AETN Educational Resources Available**

AETN has resources available for parents, teachers, and children. One of the resources is TeacherLine, an on-line teacher training, with recognized accreditation. A second is Videostreaming, which accesses a series of video clips, that correlate to curriculum standards. A new program, AETN Scholar, aired each day, includes classroom instruction and professional development opportunities. In addition, there is collaborative program from ADE and AETN that is a virtual tour of the Governors Mansion. *A Walk Upstream*, a program on child abuse prevention, will be aired in April 7 but will also be used in presentations. An online newsletter, called StationBreak, is available by email to update subscribers about relevant activities that are going on. Arkansas Studies Initiative provides material about Arkansas history and natural features.

### **Update from Arkansas Department of Education**

Susan Underwood shared a CD, *Arkansas Stories for Young Children* (Charlie Sandage) with accompanied books appropriate for PreK through elementary (she will mail each 21C program a copy of the books when they arrive). She provided information about legislative updates and Operation Respect; many of these activities and items are appropriate for use with parent involvement activities. Training for PreK Math and Science has begun.

Dee Cox reported on the Iowa Early Learning tests from the kindergarten tests. Scores overall were high; math delays were the highest issue. This will be given again this fall (Qualls=Iowa test); videoconference will be held April 8 to provide instruction on the administration of this test.

The Link has been developed with the Division of Early Child Care (KRIC) benchmarks, works sampling, and other tests to understand the connections between all the components.

Transition efforts include school, families, communities and services to make sure that children are ready for school. It is especially important to be sure that *schools* are ready for children. To see all results for children's readiness: [www.rikidscount.org](http://www.rikidscount.org).

### **Early Childhood Music Workshop**

Brian Faulkner provided information about Early Childhood music, especially for those teachers who are not music majors. Resources include materials for early childhood from a number of artists, including Steven Fites and Mr. Al. He demonstrated the use of songs to learn to follow directions, learn words in another language, days of the week, and a variety of other tasks. Music provides different way for kids to learn, which is particularly useful for special needs children.

### **AR21C Network**

We discussed ways that the AR21C network could develop its autonomy once Yale is not involved. Based on a paper ballot, 40 of the attendees felt that the establishment of some type of network was important; one person suggested that AR21C connect with groups that already exist, while other comments included “absolutely,” “21C has been a great program for our state,” and “definitely.”

The group agreed that the coordinating committee members would serve for two years. The current group of three (Martha Ragar, Marilyn Chambers, and Vicki Shelby) are willing to continue to their second year. Other 21C members who would like to be on the committee will submit their names to Beth and she will choose two. If more than two volunteer, she will use a random method to select the two participants.

People voiced support for the book discussion group; the list of current Book Group Committee members was read. Anyone who wishes to join or be removed will contact Beth. The book discussions are now self-regulated, in that the person who posts the current week’s discussion now sends the reminder to the next presenter.

AR21C coordinators will share with each other the events that they are planning for AR21C Awareness week in the beginning of April. This is also the week of the AETN presentation on 21C.