



CONNECTICUT  
CHARTS-A-COURSE

Supporting Careers in Early Education and School-Age Care

ACCREDITATION FACILITATION PROJECT

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To: The Honorable Representative Diana Urban, Chair, and Members, Select Committee on Children, Room 011, Capitol Building, Hartford, CT 06106

From: Colleen Brower, Curriculum Specialist and Deborah Flis, Director, Accreditation and Quality Initiatives

Re: Select Committee on Children Public Hearing on S.B. 983, AAC Children Affected by Disaster and Terrorism

Date: February 22, 2011

**Connecticut Charts-A-Course supports, with recommendations, *SB 983, An Act Concerning Children Affected by Disaster and Terrorism.***

We are writing in support of S.B. 983, AAC Children Affected by Disaster and Terrorism. We are active members of the Child Care Subcommittee of the Child Safety and Crisis Response Committee tri-chaired by the Commission on Children, Department of Social Services, and Department of Public Health, from which this bill originates and urge the Committee to pass this bill to advance the state's planning and implementation of disaster response. The Child Care Subcommittee meets regularly to plan for the implementation of supports to early childhood programs that might experience natural or un-natural disasters.

We urge the committee support SB 983 and to consider adding language that would create a statewide Early Childhood Crisis Response Team in Connecticut. This team should be in place to respond to the regulatory/compliance issues, business continuity challenges, and mental health issues that will arise out of a crisis, whether it involves many programs in the state or a single site that has experienced a disaster. The Crisis Team's charge would be to provide expert guidance and advice to early childhood provider(s) with the goal of assisting with the management of the crisis in order to restore business operations as quickly as possible.

The recent winter weather precipitated events that help us understand how critical the intervention of a team of experts would be to a crisis situation. Several roof collapses and dangerous situations caused by ice and water damage draw attention to our need to help early childhood programs address their needs while at the same time we work diligently to re-establish business operations. A program that closed due to a roof collapse three weeks ago remains out of their building, and only some children have been able to access new child care arrangements. A quick and expert response to this situation (by Emergency Management personnel and an early childhood crisis response team) would enable the program to re-establish itself in its community, thereby ensuring that children receive high quality care, and that staff and families can return to work.

The Child Care Safety and Crisis Response Committee, and its Child Care Subcommittee are dedicated to the goal of child safety. SB 983 and the addition of a Crisis Response Team would further this goal on behalf of all children in CT.