



## GIVE

**1. Fall campaign:** Strong fundraising push toward new WGN membership and encouraging gifts to be directed to Success By 6

- This helps United Way both to support the essential foundational work of Success By 6 and to honor its existing Community Investment Grant commitments to our funded partners.

**2. Spring fundraising:** Explore and use alternative fundraising strategies (such as a WGN signature event) to raise additional \$50,000 needed for Phase One of Ten To The Top.

- This begins the campaign for additional funds required by the new work of the initiative.

Idea is to publicly launch Ten To The Top in the spring. Basic approach: Success By 6 is the door that people walk through -- then we lead them to the Ten To The Top initiative.

## ADVOCATE

**Update on County funding:** At the budget work session last Monday, the Mentoring Collaboration was included as a top “staff recommendation” and Brook Son (Travis County planner/staff liaison to SB6) said the Commissioners didn’t question it. However, funding is VERY tight, and she is not sure if it will make it through the Budget Hearing on September 2. She said additional emails from WGN members during the last week of August would be extremely helpful.

- **ACTION ITEM:** On Monday, Susan M. will send an email to WGN members with contact info for Travis County Commissioners, and request that members send emails to our Commissioners on this important issue.

### **Legislative Agenda:**

Included in United Ways of Texas Legislative agenda are these two items:

- Expand and Improve Access to and the Quality of Pre-Kindergarten
- Increase Pre-Service Training Requirements for Child Care Workers (from 8 hours to 30 hours)

Both of these items would ultimately help the Ten To The Top initiative.

The language in the proposed PreK legislation not only encourages districts to offer full-day PreK programs (AISD already does); but provides incentives to districts to partner with child care centers so that TEA funding for PreK could be given to child centers if

they deliver comparable services to eligible 4-year-olds. Currently, low-income 4-year-olds are offered services only in AISD school buildings, along with elementary age children. Families, children, and child care centers would be better served in 4-year-olds didn't have to leave child care facilities for PreK services. The class sizes and staff-child ratios are smaller in centers; they can receive services full-year and full-day; and education dollars can be allocated to centers so that they can provide qualified teachers and comparable curriculum to the schools. Many states currently require these public/private partnerships for PreK – but Texas is slow to embrace this option. The new legislation encourages partnerships with high-quality child care facilities (4-star rated or NAEYC accredited programs).

The increase of pre-service training hours for child care workers is also helpful to our project. Better qualified teachers are a key to high-quality child care. If passed, we can encourage our participating centers to leverage the new pre-service requirement toward a coordinated professional development plan.

- **FOR CONSIDERATION:** UWCA is currently considering partnering with United Ways of Texas to offer a “Public Policy and Advocacy 101” training for WGN/SB6 members late in the fall.
- **FUTURE ACTION ITEM:** WGN volunteers can make legislative visits in the winter and perhaps provide public testimony during hearings on the bills. (WGN members may wish to provide information from the Neighborhood Focus Groups during legislative visits or public testimony.)

### Neighborhood Focus Groups

Success By 6 staff would like to work with the SB6 Early Childhood Education taskforce group to come up with questions.

Most helpful focus for questions:

1. Awareness of family supports for young children in neighborhood (e.g. “What services or resources are available in this neighborhood for young children and families?”)
2. Access to quality child care issues (e.g. “How many child care programs did you have to visit before you found one to meet the needs of your family?” “Are you pleased with the quality of child care that is available?” “Why or why not?”)

## VOLUNTEER

In foundational year for Ten To The Top (September 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009), would like to complete five Child Care Facility Improvement Projects with WGN volunteers at non-profit centers in the Texas Rising Star quality rating system.

- **ACTION ITEM:** The next volunteer opportunity is Friday, September 5<sup>th</sup>. HTML invites were sent Wednesday to WGN members. See flyer for other Fall 2008 volunteer project dates.