



Winning Beginning NY Co-Conveners Bios

Karen Schimke, President & CEO Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy



Karen Schimke is the President of the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy (SCAA), a 137 year old non-profit, non-partisan public policy and advocacy organization working to improve health and human services in New York State.

Ms. Schimke previously served as Executive Deputy Commissioner for the State Department of Health from February 1995 to September 1996 and in that same position for the State Department of Social Services from August 1993 to February 1995.

Ms. Schimke was the Commissioner of Erie County Department of Social Services from 1988 to 1993. Ms. Schimke has many years in government service and in non-profit work; her work has always been as an advocate for individuals, families and children. While she has always been involved in services for children, at SCAA that focus has intensified.

Ms. Schimke co-chairs the Advisory Board to the Children's Cabinet and the Early Childhood Advisory Council. She serves on the New York State Department of Education Universal Prekindergarten External Work Group and was previously on two Regents task forces on closing the performance gap. She is a past policy chair for the New York State Association for the Education of Young Children.

Ms. Schimke spearheaded the creation of the New York Children's Action Network (New York CAN), seeing the need for a collaborative and forceful voice for children in the state. SCAA is also a co-convenor of *Winning Beginning NY*, the state's early care and learning coalition.

Ms. Schimke has received many honors over the years and has been an active community volunteer and board member of numerous health and welfare organizations. She is currently a Board member of Prevent Child Abuse New York, Health Information Exchange of New York, and WMHT. Ms. Schimke earned a Master of Social Work degree at Case Western Reserve University, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in social welfare at the University of Nebraska.

**Kristen Kerr, Executive Director
New York State Association for the Education of Young Children**



Ms. Kerr became the Executive Director for the New York State Association for the Education of Young Children (NYSAEYC) in January 2007 and first joined the NYSAEYC staff in January of 2006 as the Public Policy Coordinator. A longtime member of the Association, she has 17 years of experience as an early care and education professional.

As Public Policy Coordinator, she worked with our seventeen local affiliates to educate our membership, our elected officials and the public about critical early care and education issues. As Executive Director she continues to direct the Associations public policy efforts in addition to her other responsibilities. This includes representing NYSAEYC as a co-convenor of the Winning Beginning NY coalition; serving as a member of the QUALITYstarsNY design group; and co-chairing a workgroup developing 0-3 early learning guidelines. Ms. Kerr was recently appointed to the newly formed Early Childhood Advisory council where she serves as a co-chair for the workforce development committee.

Ms. Kerr's previous early care and education experience includes that of: preschool teacher, school age child care director, child care center director for a large not-for profit program and research assistant to Anne Mitchell at Early Childhood Policy Research. Just prior to joining the NYSAEYC staff she served as an education specialist for a child care resource and referral agency.

**Nancy Kolben, Executive Director,
Center for Children's Initiatives**



Ms. Kolben is Executive Director of the Center for Children's Initiatives (CCI), formerly Child Care, Inc., the leading early care and education policy and advocacy organization in New York City. CCI's mission is to promote quality early learning, healthy development and care for all children, birth through school age. CCI is a vital training and technical assistance resource to the field of early care and education and a resource to parents who are seeking the best early care and education options for their children. CCI works with policy makers and advocates to develop a quality and coherent system of services that meets the needs of children and their families. CCI has spearheaded initiatives to promote national accreditation, build new child care facilities and expand family child care networks across the city. This includes expanded supports for quality services in infant/toddler programs.

Ms. Kolben joined the organization more than 25 years ago and has helped to guide many of its important initiatives including the launch of Quality New York, a major citywide effort to promote national accreditation, the creation of an employer sponsored emergency child care program, a special facilities development initiative and the creation of the Child Care, Inc. Primer, an information resource for the field.

Ms. Kolben has worked to make the vision of universal prekindergarten to offer quality early learning opportunities for all children a reality with special attention to ensuring the full participation of community based early childhood programs in the delivery of these services. She has worked closely with the public education system, other public agencies and early childhood programs to support the full implementation of universal preschool. She is an active leader in the Winning Beginning NY campaign, a statewide policy and mobilization effort to promote expansion of support for and investment in the quality of early care and education.

Ms. Kolben has focused as well on the expansion of infant toddler services and promoted the launch of CCI's Better Baby Care Campaign and the funding for the seven Infant Toddler Resource Centers across the state.

Ms. Kolben has guided the development of numerous publications on all aspects of early childhood policy. She has spoken extensively on a comprehensive vision for early care and education. Ms. Kolben also served as president and founding board member of the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA), a

membership organization of more than 700 CC&R agencies in all 50 states. Her professional training is in social work.

**Carol Saginaw, Executive Director,
Early Care & Learning Council**



Ms. Saginaw has been the Executive Director of the Early Care & Learning Council, formerly the New York State Child Care Coordinating Council, since 2001. In this capacity she is responsible for the supervision, direction and development of all aspects of the Early Care & Learning Council's programs and the identification of funding sources, preparation of proposals and the implementation of policies established by the Board and Membership. She works under the direct supervision of the Board of Directors. She is the official public spokesperson for leadership in child care for the organization.

Prior to her work at the Early Care & Learning Council, Ms. Saginaw was a consultant in program development and government relations for Saginaw Consulting, where she worked with New York City-based not-for-profit organizations including the Coalition of Voluntary Agencies in Mental Health, Women in Need, Citizen's Committee for Children, Human Services Council and the Therapeutic Communities Association.

She has also served as a full-time consultant to Value Behavioral Health in Falls Church, Virginia, as the first Executive Director for the Alliance for the Mentally Ill of New York State, and as Assistant Director in the Bureau of Forensics Services, New York State Office of Mental Health.

Ms. Saginaw received her undergraduate degree and a Masters of Social Work from the University of Michigan.