

1920-1949

Central California Association for Nursery Education – History

State Level: “To prepare for the future, we must be knowledgeable of our past. The California Association for the Education of Young Children has evolved from the need to identify with a statewide organization that speaks out and acts on behalf of young children, their families, and their educators.

“The organization began when a few nursery school professionals joined together at Mills College of Oakland, California in 1926. Early childhood educators came together to share and disseminate information, to provide support for the emerging profession, and to affect all aspects of public policy related to children. The roots of both the national and the state association grew from this strong initial affiliation of nursery educators.

“After 20 years of developing separately, the Northern and the Southern California Associations for Nursery Education decided to join together for annual conferences in 1948, alternating north and south.” Source; Brief History of CAEYC and the Board of Directors published in the CAEYC Board of Directors Manual, 1991.

National Level: During this same time period, at the national level, “researchers and educators began organizing nursery schools for young children. Concerned about the quality of the proliferating programs, Patty Smith Hill identified a multidisciplinary group of 25 individuals, among them Arnold Gesell, Lois Meek (Stolz), and Abigail Eliot, to consider the need for a new association. A public conference was held in Washington

D.C. in 1926. By 1929, the group was organized as the National Association for Nursery Education (NANE) and had published its first book – *Minimum Essentials for Nursery Education.*” Source: *History of NAEYC, Historical Overview*, downloaded 2/5/2009.

During World War II, NANE members took an active role in the development and implementation of the Lanham Act of 1940. This act authorized and subsidized a large childcare system in 635 communities in the whole country. From the 1945 to the mid-50s, “A small group of dedicated volunteers kept the association going with biennial conferences, a quarterly bulletin, and various publications.” Source: *History of NAEYC, Historical Overview*, downloaded 2/5/2009.