

BETTER KID CARE E-NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2008

Hello Newsletter Subscribers!

Welcome to this month's issue of the Better Kid Care E-Newsletter - A newsletter for those caring for children.

Notable Quote: "I looked on child rearing not only as a work of love and duty but as a profession that was fully as interesting and challenging as any honorable profession in the world and one that demanded the best that I could bring to it." ~ Rose Kennedy

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TIPS FOR EARLY EDUCATORS AND PRACTITIONERS:

Week of the Young Child - April 19-25, 2009

WOYC logo April 19-25 is 2009's Week of the Young Child. It is held each year to honor young children and thank early childhood teachers and all those who make a difference in young children's lives. As you start to make plans to celebrate Week of the Young Child, your local library invites you to team up to highlight the importance of these early years. The Liaisons with National Organizations Serving Youth and Children committee of the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) encourages you to reach out to the library in your community by offering to provide child-created art work for display during April 2009.

- Talk with the librarian about available space - bulletin boards, blank walls, shelf-ends
- Start collecting work that exemplifies child-directed creations (no color-sheets or crafts from patterns)
- Highlight the art by backing each piece with colored construction paper
- Work with the librarian to prepare a letter to send home inviting children's families to the library through the month of April

For more information on the Week of the Young Child go to <http://www.naeyc.org/about/woyc/>

Do you have a great tip or good thing? Send us your best tips! Email Christine at crb16@psu.edu or contact the Better Kid Care Program at 814-865-7894 or 800-452-9108 (within PA).

FEATURE ARTICLE PROFESSIONALISM: WHERE TO BEGIN? PART 1

by Christine Belinda

Professionalism means something different to each person. Depending on our experiences, background, and training, each of us holds a unique vision of what it means to be a professional. In addition, individual professions embrace norms and requirements that go hand-in-hand with the field of work. If you work with a program, that program may also have professional guidelines to follow. Adding to these distinct professional characteristics, society as well holds broad expectations for professionals. With all this in mind, how do we begin to embrace professionalism?

Define professionalism

Professionalism is defined as having professional character, spirit, or methods; the standing, practice, ethical behavior, or methods of a professional, as distinguished from an amateur. Consider words associated with the term professional: expert, specialized, qualified, skilled, proficient, certified, licensed, and trained. Professionalism involves expertise and knowledge of a particular area and meets a standard of requirements. Typically, professions have some type of career lattice defined for continual professional growth and hold a responsibility to ethical behaviors. In order to embrace professionalism, it's important to look at professionalism from individual, career-based, and program-based views.

Professionalism starts with you

How we feel about professionalism and what we continue to learn will add direction and focus in defining professionalism. Refresh your views

regarding professionalism; ask yourself the following questions:

TIP: Have a co-worker or someone you know (in the field) try and respond to the same questions. Compare your notes and discuss similarities and differences.

1. What does professionalism mean to you?
2. How have you learned about professionalism?
3. How do you feel professionalism is shown?
4. In your opinion, how is professionalism earned?
5. Do you consider yourself a professional? Why?

Representing the professional image

Studies show that interpretations of one's professional image are made quickly by simply observing a person's physical actions and appearance. Although we know this is not a single representation of professionalism, it is, however, an important factor.

- Make eye contact while talking with others
- Properly introduce yourself (shake hands, make eye contact, and state name in welcoming manner)
- Speak clearly, confidently, and use appropriate topics
- Take turns speaking and allow time for others to respond
- Be aware of your body space; how you are sitting, walking
- Present a professional image (professional dress, cleanliness)

Professionalism in early childhood education

The field of early education has had no universal set of training standards or certification for its teachers.

The licensing, standards, and early education requirements for employees can be vastly different from state to state and program to program. Because of this, professionalism in early childhood has gained attention and review in the last several years. Early education is seeing a professional shift. Not only are individual early educators taking steps to increase professionalism, professional growth is also happening at both the state and national levels to improve early education and to create better standards for early childhood.

Many states and national programs are working diligently to develop specific training requirements to determine eligibility in the early childhood workforce, and to provide opportunities for professional development and growth. Also, educational and scientific researchers are beginning to make large strides in areas of early childhood development, such as how children learn. These discoveries create a better defined knowledge base required for a profession.

Professionalism specific to the program

If you are involved in an early childhood program, it is important to find out and discuss with the director the expected professional behaviors and qualifications and why they are essential. Most programs will offer policy and program handbooks that specifically detail what is expected. Although each program is unique, there are standard suggestions:

- Know well the program's mission statement and educational philosophy (sharing belief in the vision of your program enriches professionalism)
- Be well informed of policies, procedures, and expectations
- Treat everyone with respect and

kindness

- Embrace positive work relationships (no gossiping or inappropriate behavior towards others)
- Apply developmentally appropriate practices for children and families
- Be open to learning

Cultivating professionalism

Consider the following from the NAEYC's (National Association for the Education of Young Children) Where We Stand on Standards for Programs to Prepare Early Childhood Professionals:

“Well-prepared early childhood professionals identify themselves with the early childhood profession; use ethical, professional standards; demonstrate self-motivated, on-going learning; collaborate; think reflectively and critically; and advocate for children, families, and the profession. Early childhood professionals provide one of the most important services to society; they must understand and cultivate their role as professionals doing critical work.”

There are many different levels of professional preparation for the early educator, depending on the role, setting, and experience, but all early educators must “cultivate their role as professionals.” Being a professional implies proficiency. Many state departments of early learning and education have career lattice guides which highlight required accumulation of training and professional development for various levels. In Pennsylvania, the PA Keys to Quality Early Learning Career Lattice can be viewed at <http://www.pakeys.org/profdev/CareerLattice.aspx>. Ongoing professional development, in the form of conferences, workshops,

classes, and schooling, are excellent opportunities to build knowledge and expertise.

Begin to embrace professionalism by having clear definitions of what professionalism means to you, both personally and from the field of early education; know your personal goals, what is expected from your work, and what is required from you in terms of holding a certificate, credential, or degree. Cultivating professionalism promotes accountability in our work, provides the opportunity to advance, and deepens our commitment to early education and care.

Read “Embracing Professionalism Part 2: Forward Visions” in next month’s February E-News.

References:

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We Stand on Standards for Programs to Prepare Early Childhood Professionals, 2006, www.naeyc.org

RESEARCH-BASED EARLY CHILDHOOD INFORMATION

Using Research to Improve Outcomes for Young Children: A Call for Action - In response to concerns about the limited influence research has had on early childhood (EC) programs and practices, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) conducted a small multidisciplinary conference at the Wingspread Conference Center in Racine, Wisconsin. The primary goal of the conference was to develop a set of action-oriented recommendations that would advance the field of early childhood and improve the outcomes for young children, especially children living in the most vulnerable of circumstances.

The Pre-K Pinch: Early Education and the Middle Class - For far too many middle-class families, the very program proven to help all young children enter school ready to learn and succeed is beyond their reach, according to a new report released today by Pre-K Now. “The Pre-K Pinch: Early Education and the Middle Class” reveals that eligibility requirements and prohibitively high costs lead such families to sacrifice basic household needs to pay for early education and care for their children, or to settle for low-quality options with unproven benefits.

NAEYC Report on State Early Childhood Professional Development Systems

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has just released a new report, *Workforce Designs: A Policy Blueprint for State Early Childhood*

Professional Development Systems. The report looks at policies that bring together professional development activities, as well as those that promote and uphold professional development effectively within the state system. It also emphasizes the importance of policy principles and policy areas that help create an integrated system which works towards quality in the settings where early childhood professionals work.

DISTANCE EDUCATION HIGHLIGHTS

Do lessons in your home — when it’s convenient and you have time!

Are you aware that Better Kid Care provides comprehensive curricula in early childhood development? The Better Kid Care curriculum follows the PA Core Body of Knowledge and offers multiple course titles to choose from. Each course offers numerous Distance Education lessons, providing a well rounded approach to obtaining your professional development. View the entire Better Kid Care Distance Education Curricula on line at www.betterkidcare.psu.edu and choose your course of study today! Register for a lesson or try an entire course!

Featured Course: Understanding Ethics

Ethics simply means doing the right thing. A professional Code of Ethics for child care providers is a guide for dealing responsibly and respectfully with children, parents, co-workers, and the community. This first unit focuses on your ethical responsibilities toward children. The second unit covers your ethical responsibilities toward families, and the third focuses on ethical relationships with co-workers and the community. The three lessons together will give you an overview of ethics based on the National Association for the Education of

Young Children (NAEYC) Code of Ethical Conduct.

- Ethics: Your Responsibilities to Children (K6C1) CDA 6
- Ethics: Your Responsibilities to Families (K6C1) CDA 6
- Ethics: Your Responsibilities to Co-workers and the Community (K6C1) CDA 6

View a complete listing of all distance education lessons and information about how to register by visiting the Better Kid Care Distance Education page.

HEALTH AND SAFETY TIPS

We Can! Making Healthier Food Choices

Offer ways to enhance children's activity and nutrition from the National Heart and Blood Institute's We Can! Discover tips and tools to help choose and prepare healthier foods for your family or the children you serve. Serving healthier foods in the appropriate portions per food group and calorie level is one of the best ways to ensure that your children are getting proper nutrition without eating too many calories. Learn about GO, SLOW, and WHOA foods:

GO foods are the lowest in fat and added sugar. They are also "nutrient dense" (which means they are better sources of vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients important to health) and relatively low in calories. Enjoy GO foods almost anytime.

SLOW foods are higher in fat, added sugar, and/or calories than GO foods. Have SLOW foods sometimes or less often.

WHOA foods are the highest in fat and/or added sugar. They are "calorie dense" (a small portion is relatively high in calories), and many are low in vitamins, minerals, and other

nutrients as well. Have WHOA foods only once in a while or on special occasions.

Learn more by visiting http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/downloads/tip_choices.pdf

Or visit the We Can! Web site at <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/>

We Can! is an effort of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) in collaboration with the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), and the National Cancer Institute (NCI).

TURN THE PAGE:

Great Books to Read with Children: Books to Grow On

The members of the American Library Association-Children's Book Council Joint Committee have compiled books for birth through three years of age. The following books, for children up to six months old, explore the world through the senses and seeing faces and objects as well as hearing sounds.

1. All Fall Down, by Helen Oxenbury, published by Little Simon, ISBN
2. Animal Crackers: Bedtime, by Jane Dyer, published by Little, Brown
3. Baby Animals: Black and White, by Phyllis Tildes, published by Charlesbridge
4. Baby Rock, Baby Roll, by Stella Blackstone, published by Holiday House
5. Big Fat Hen, by Keith Baker, published by Harcourt
6. Blue Hat, Green Hat, by Sandra

Boynton, published by Little Simon

7. How a Baby Grows, by Nola Buck, published by HarperCollins

8. I Love Colors, by Margaret Miller, published by Simon & Schuster

9. Max, by Ken Wilson-Max, published by Jump at the Sun

10. My First Baby Games, by Jane Manning, published by HarperCollins

11. My Very First Mother Goose, by Iona Opie, published by Candlewick

12. Peek-A-Boo!, by Janet and Allen Ahlberg, published by Viking

To see more ages and stages and books to grow on, visit <http://www.cbcbooks.org/readinglists/bookstogrow.html>

FOR YOUR FAMILIES: FAMILY TIME / WORK TIME

Are you looking for articles to share with your families? Do you need information for your parent/family bulletin board? Family Time / Work Time shares easy-to-read articles for busy parents and caretakers with a focus on Building Strong Families.

You are welcome to print and share these publications with your friends, family, and other child care providers.

Make Meal Times Count

by Nancy Wilson
Early Childhood Program Specialist

Make meal times special family times. It may be the only time your family is all together. Do busy schedules allow for only one or two meals together each day? If so, make an effort to have this time together. Turn off the television and computer. Limit phone calls. Sit down together. Take time to talk to each other. Really listen to everyone. Give your child a chance to talk about things. Try to keep conversations positive, so meal times are happy times.

2008-2009 SATELLITE SEASON IS HERE!

Mark your calendar now!

March 26, 2009

Art Appreciation 101 for Young Children

K2C1 topic code 19 / CDA Competency 2 /

PA Early Learning Standards Key Learning Area: Creative Arts

Believe it or not, even infants can begin to appreciate art. Learn how to introduce and talk with children of all ages about art made by them and others. Try creative ways to react to art.

About participating . . . Each workshop lasts two hours, including satellite broadcast time, discussion, and group activities. If you live in Pennsylvania, contact your local extension educator for information to attend a workshop in your area. Outside Pennsylvania view Out-of-State Information link.

Each satellite broadcast can also be viewed online as either a Live Satellite Broadcast or choose Past Satellite Broadcast video links.

Want to share your ideas from past satellite sessions or ideas for future satellite sessions? Contact Better Kid Care by e-mailing us at betterkidcare@psu.edu or by phoning 800-452-9108 to share your comments.

Visit the Satellite Workshop link for more information. Missed a show? Visit the Past Satellite Workshop page to view video online. If you live in Pennsylvania, contact your local extension educator for information to attend a workshop in your area. Live outside of Pennsylvania? Visit the Out-of-State Information link.

CDA NEWS!

State Child Care Licensing Regulations that Include the CDA Credential

Each state has the power to establish qualifications for staff that work in licensed child care centers. State laws describe types of staff (directors, teachers, and aides) and establish guidelines regarding age, education, experience, and ongoing training.

The Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential is included in the child care licensing regulations of 49 states and the District of Columbia. View a chart by state http://www.cdacouncil.org/res_lic.htm. For more information, please contact your licensing agency. If your state's child care licensing regulations change, please contact:

Council for Professional Recognition
Attention: Candidate Services
Department

2460 16th Street, NW · Washington
DC 20009-3575

Telephone: 800-424-4310 or 202-265-9090

Need more CDA help? Visit Better Kid Care's "What is the CDA?" link and get answers to your CDA questions! Get CDA support! Call Christine at 800-452-9108. E-mail your CDA questions to Christine at crb16@psu.edu.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS

The following information highlights upcoming professional development opportunities available for early childhood practitioners:

In Pennsylvania:

- January 24, 2009 – Early Years Conference, State College, PA 16801, contact 814-355-4897

- January 24 – Professional Development Day, Butler County, PA, contact 724-287-2761

- March 28 – Professional Development Day, Beaver County, PA, contact 724-654-8370

- April 2-3 – PHSA Back to Basics: Serving Families in a New Era, Harrisburg, PA

- April 17-18 - DVAEYC Conference, Philadelphia, PA

- May 7-8 – 10th Annual Visitation Day, Carnegie Mellon Cyert Center for Early Education, Pittsburgh, PA

- May 13-15 - First International Early Arts Conference, Pittsburgh, PA; more information to come.

- May 19 - The 2009 Family Support Conference: Unlocking Resources: Parent Leadership is the Key, Pittsburgh, PA, email dadick@pitt.edu

- June 1 – June 2 - 2nd Annual Higher Education Institute on Diversity; It's our Future: Investing in Each and Every Young Child, Harrisburg/Hershey, PA

- June 20- 22 - American Evolution: Arts in the New Civic Life, Americans for the Arts Annual Convention, Philadelphia, PA.

- July 19-24 – PA Governor's Institute, "The Arts," Valley Forge, PA, contact 717-783-9260

- July 19-24 - PA Governor's Institute, "Early Childhood Literacy," Huntingdon, PA, contact 717-783-9260

- July 26-31 – PA Governor's Institute, "Pre-Kindergarten Literacy," LaPlume, PA, contact 717-783-9260

Other:

Workshops for Kindergarten Teachers across the Commonwealth - The

Office of Child Development and Early Learning is excited to announce a full-day professional development opportunity for kindergarten practitioners for 2009.

Outside of Pennsylvania:

- February 12-14, 2009 – International Conference on Parent Education and Parenting, Denton, Texas, www.cpe.unt.edu or call 940-369-7246
- February 23- 25 - Child Welfare League of America National Conference; Children Today... America's Future
- March 1 - National Conference on Family Literacy, Orlando, Florida,
- March 8-10 - Building Meaningful Learning in an Age of Standards: Inspirations from Reggio Emilia, Englewood, NJ, contact 201-568-0817 X32 or bberger@bergenfamilycenter.org
- March 12 -14 - Changing the World One Child at a Time (Virginia AEYC), Richmond, Virginia
- March 19-21 – Reflective Practice: Listening, Looking, and Learning with Young Children, West Chester, Ohio, contact CAEYC
- March 22-25 - 6th Annual National Training Institute on Effective Practices: Supporting Young Children's Social/Emotional Development, Clearwater Beach, Florida.
- April 21-24 - 2009 Extension Family Science Network (EFSN) Conference: Circle of Influence: Discovery, Scholarship and Engagement through Family Science, New Orleans, LA
- April 22-25 – National Coalition for Campus Child Care Centers Annual Conference, Phoenix, Arizona
- May 10-13 – 5th World

Environmental Congress, Montreal, Canada

- June 9 – World Forum 2009 on Early Education and Care
- June 28-30 - The Values of the Reggio Emilia Approach, North American Reggio Emilia Alliance, Boulder, CO
- June 30-July 2 - Advanced Study, North American Reggio Emilia Alliance, Boulder, CO
- June 28-July 2 - Comprehensive Experience, North American Reggio Emilia Alliance, Boulder, CO
- July 23 – 25: The American Horticultural Society's 2009 National Children & Youth Garden Symposium, Common Ground: Gardens for a Greener Tomorrow, Cleveland, Ohio

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF INTEREST

Early Education

- Reach & Risk Report -The Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning's Program Reach and County Risk Assessment report of FY 2007-2008 is now available online. The Reach and Risk Report is an excellent way to show policymakers and community leaders that there are young children in every community that can benefit from quality early education opportunities, yet more public investment is needed to reach all children that can benefit.
- In case you missed The 2009 PreK-Now Satellite Conference: Breaking Down Barriers to Quality Pre-K on December 10, 2008, the conference was recorded. The webcast and resources from the conference are now available on Pre-K Now's website.
- PA Department of Education

Chapter 49 Web site – Visit the Pennsylvania Department of Education and Bureau of School Leadership and Teacher Quality's Chapter 49 Web site. There you will find updates, announcements, a document library, newsletters, frequently asked questions, and information about Chapter 49 as teacher preparation programs transition to meet new regulatory requirements.

Grants And Funding

- New PA T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Opportunity for After-school Practitioners -Pennsylvania Child Care Association (PACCA) has partnered with the PA Key, PA Statewide Afterschool/Youth Development Network (PSAYDN), United Way of Southeastern PA (UWSEPA), and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST) to expand scholarship offerings to school-age/after-school practitioners and youth work professionals.
 - Teaching Tolerance Grants - Teaching Tolerance offers grants of \$500 to \$2,500 to pre-K-12 classroom teachers for projects designed to reduce prejudice among youth, improve inter-group relations in schools, and/or support educator professional development in these areas. Proposals from other community organizations and houses of worship will be considered on the basis of direct student impact.
 - NEW! Bayer Advanced "Grow Together with Roses" School Garden Award - Deadline: January 23, 2009
- Believing in the power of roses, the Bayer Advanced "Grow Together with Roses" School Garden Award will help 25 schools establish rose gardens designed to nurture peaceful relations and instill a strong sense of community. Garden programs will be selected based on plans to integrate

these goals and involve members of their community.

Nature Related

- Act Green - Scholastic has launched ACT GREEN!, a fun, educational Web site designed to motivate and empower kids to take action in school, at home, and in their community to preserve the environment. This multi-media Web site provides kids, parents, and teachers with customized green plans, expert tips, inspiring green short films provided by Live Earth, and a “Greenroom” to share ideas with other kids.

- The Nature Explore Club Educator Edition gives preschool through 3rd grade teachers an easy and affordable way to use the outdoors as an integral part of learning. Correlates to National Science, Math, Visual Arts, and Social Studies standards. Developed by the National Arbor Day Foundation and Dimensions Educational Research Foundation.

Families

- TRUCE (Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children’s Entertainment) Toy Guide 2008-2009 - This guide is intended to help adults promote children’s creative and constructive play by making informed choices about toys, and by working with others at home, school, and in the community to promote positive play and toys.

- From Sesame Street: Bilingual Resources for Military Families - In recognition of the contributions made by the United States Armed Forces, Sesame Workshop presents this bilingual educational outreach initiative designed for military families and their young children to share. Resources include videos, parent information, and a facilitator

guide — all available in English and Spanish.

HEALTH

- Reading, Writing, and Hungry: The consequences of food insecurities on children and our nation’s economic success - Rising food and energy costs are making food insecurity an increasingly alarming issue for everyone, especially children. Children who go hungry in kindergarten lag behind their peers in reading and math by the third grade. Hungry children suffer from hyperactivity, absenteeism, and generally do worse both socially and academically in school. Early childhood health experts from the Children’s Sentinel Nutrition Assessment Program and the Food Research and Action Center find, in a report for PAES, that food insecurity among young children carries significant economic costs for individuals and families, and therefore economic problems for society as a whole.

BETTER KID CARE RESOURCES

Winter Resources from Better Kid Care - The season of winter brings many new things to think about for early educators and families. Winter is often the season of reflection and planning ahead. Ideas reflected may be: spirit of community, kindness, and generosity, health, celebrations (seasons, holidays), diversity and culture, recharging our energy, getting a handle on stress, music, and overall reflections and observations of children and programs. Use the following lists and links to find great information to support your work while entering the winter season. <http://www.betterkidcare.psu.edu/page18.html>

Better Kid Care Kit

Need ideas in your work caring for children? When you enroll in the Better Kid Care Program and sign up for the Better Kid Care Kit, child care providers will receive several free publications in the mail. Family home child care providers will also receive The Basics of Caring for Children in Your Home notebook to organize and store your Better Kid Care publications. Have you signed up to receive a Better Kid Care Kit yet? Complete our online registration form or call 800-452-9108 to order.

Preview notebook contents: Tip Sheets, Activities Pages and Lunch and Snack Ideas online.

All publications are available online to print and share with your friends, family, and other childcare providers. Select issues are also available in Spanish.

New Staff Orientation curriculum is specifically designed for new staff members in child care centers. Meets the Keystone STARS Performance Standards. Order at no cost by calling 800-452-9108.

Home-Based Caregiver Orientation - Meets the Keystone STARS Core Series Training Requirements. Order at no cost by calling 800-452-9108.

**BETTER KID CARE MENTORING
TELEPHONE HELP LINE** for Child
Care Providers in Pennsylvania

Do you have questions about caring
for other people's children, such as:

Nancy on phone

- How do I get a child to eat?
- Why won't a child share?
- How do I stop a child from biting
other children?
- What should I do when a parent
doesn't pay on time?

Call the Better Kid Care Mentoring
Line at 800-859-8340 or e-mail your
questions to betterkidcare@psu.edu
for information about child care and
children's issues.

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Upcoming Feature Article in
February E-Newsletter:

Embracing Professionalism, Part 2

Forward Visions

Reflections...

We would love to hear from you!
E-mail your ideas to crb16@psu.edu
or call 814-865-7894.

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