

Center News



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A Newsletter for Federal Child Care Centers

Winter 2004

The GSA Nationwide
Network of Child
Care Coordinators

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GSA Army Partnership Expanded

The GSA/Army Partnership has been expanded! All accredited GSA centers can now accept active duty army personnel. Army personnel will pay the same rates as they would pay at on base child care centers and the Army will subsidize the difference in tuition rates directly with the provider. This is an excellent opportunity to increase both Federal and overall enrollment so centers are strongly encouraged to market to all **active duty** Army personnel in their area including ROTC, recruiters, reservists, and National Guard. Centers that are not accredited should seek guidance from their regional child care coordinator regarding their eligibility to participate in the program.

The program is easy to administer for the center and the family. For all forms and information regarding enrollment please visit our website at: www.gsa.gov/childcare. Judy Gonzales, GSA contact for the program, can be reached at 816-823-4578.

Little Acorns Celebrates The Holiday Season

The Little Acorns Child Development Center, located in the McCoy Federal Building, celebrated the holiday season with a Christmas performance for their parents and building tenants. Little Acorns, owned and operated by Kathy Rayborn, recently received its third NAEYC re-accreditation and is one of the few accredited centers in Jackson, MS.



This center, which is home to 68 children, is undergoing a major interior renovation. When complete, the center will have a new commercial kitchen and new finishes throughout.



Kevin's Corner

The great Victorian critic, John Ruskin, once wrote, "When we build, let us think we build forever." Pretty inspiring words. When he wrote them in the nineteenth century, just about everyone would have understood and would have agreed that buildings should be of such solid stuff that they would indeed last forever (or a close approximation thereof). In our heart of hearts, this desire for permanence in our built environment is obviously still a fond wish for a very large portion of the population. Just look at the preference for new suburban home styles imported directly from the era of Ruskin, or even before. As a group, it's obvious that we prefer new buildings to have the trappings of the old, even though we also want the convenience, speed of construction and relative lack of expense that modern methods provide. All too often these desires conflict, but that is a subject for another article.

The reality is that the industry considers the typical life span of a new building to be about forty years. Since I am 52, I can assure you that that 40 years is *not* forever, and seems quite young indeed, especially for something made of bricks and mortar, or reasonable facsimiles thereof. It's true that Government buildings have 100 year life as a stated goal. It's not just that the buildings fall apart after forty years (though some fall apart much sooner) – the real problem is that they typically become obsolete long before they wear out.

So to reflect today's building environment, I would modify Ruskin's wish by updating it to "When we build, let us think we build FOR forever." It doesn't have quite the same ring, but the point is, when we build we should do so in such a way that we continually learn and constantly improve from the experience. As a result, the next time we build, it will be better. This is particularly true of Government work, the costs of which the taxpayer bears. Innovation, research, inspiration – these are by-products the taxpayer has the right to expect and can be much more economically provided by a

public entity that chooses to construct facilities that serve as a model. With its huge market influence, GSA can also influence business decisions that will benefit the whole society, for now *and* the long haul.

What do these musings have to do with child care facilities? Centers are less than 1/3 of 1% of GSA's portfolio. Expending the effort to do them in a forward-thinking way, incorporating the best technology to make them sustainable, eminently livable environments allows building prototypes that can open our eyes and influence the design decisions on the other 99%+ of our buildings. This "R and D" can be done in a center at a fraction of the cost required for a large, far above prospectus facility, where the stakes may be considered to be too high to incorporate a vegetative roof or a straw bale wall, for example, on a million square foot building. But on a 10,000 square foot building, the improvements are more easily accomplished and are *tangible*. A small investment offers a way to demonstrate magnificent opportunities. At GSA, I am proud that we have very often been able to build *for* forever by providing nurturing environments for the next generation, and insight for the present one.

Northwest Artic Region Child Care Centers Receive Awards

Champions for Children, Child Care Resource & Referral, Schools' Out Washington, Bright Horizons Family Solutions, and the City of Seattle hosted a special event on October 24th to award and recognize accomplishments and achievements of local early childhood programs and individuals. Three GSA child care centers, Building Blocks, Little Aviators and Little Eagles, were represented among the 90 plus certificates presented that evening. These three centers received a total of **19** individual awards presented to individuals who achieved levels of professionalism above and beyond minimum state licensing requirements.

The following individuals from Building Blocks were honored: Emilia Holbik, Debbie Osley, Angie Silva and Sandi Werner. Little Aviators honorees were Brook Arthalony, Aurora Cabanot, Beasie Jewel, Desiree Malone, and Joyce Yueh. Little Eagles awards went to Vicky Barrientes, Virginia Caculitan, Linda Callejas, Zeny Christman, Lyndia Cruza, Lily Ibay, Nenita Maghirang, Marla Miller Gunderson, Leah Joy Romero, and Vicky Villar.

The event coincided with the Washington Association for the Education of Young Children Conference. Seattle City council President Peter Steinbrueck and King County Councilman Larry Gossett presented the awards. The keynote speaker for the evening's event was Dr. Jamilah R. Jor'dan, Founder and President of the Partnership for Quality Child Care in Chicago.



Pictured L to R Top: Larry Gossett, King County Councilmember & Little Eagles' Vickie Barrientes.

Pictured L to R Bottom: Little Eagles teachers Leah Joy Romero, Virginia Caculitan, Linda Callejas, Vicky Villar, Marla Miller Gunderson and Nenita Maghirang with Peter Steinbrueck, Seattle City Council President.

15th Annual GSA Child Care Conference

The 15th annual GSA Child Care Conference will be held at the Seaport Hotel at the World Trade Center, One Seaport Lane, Boston, MA July 20-22, 2004. The conference will open with a luncheon at noon on Tuesday, July 20th and end with a luncheon on Thursday, July 22nd.

One of the highlights of the conference will be a presentation by Dr. T Berry Brazelton, one of the most renowned experts on child development.

This year the room rate is \$159 plus tax, single/double occupancy (each additional adult is \$25 per night). Children 18 and under are free. This rate is available three days pre and post conference (based on availability). The Seaport Hotel is a smoke free environment. To make a reservation call 1-877-SEAPORT (1-877-732-7678) and ask for the "GSA Child Care Conference" room block. The deadline for reservations at the hotel is June 28, 2004.



Dr. T. Berry Brazelton

Conference rates are as follows:

	Early Bird (before 6/28/04)	Regular rate
Caregivers	\$140	\$165
Directors and Assistant Directors	\$200	\$225
All other attendees	\$250	\$275

Registration brochures will be mailed in mid April. Visit our website at www.gsa.gov/childcare for updates about the conference. For more information, please call Nancy Norris on (404) 331-1851.

Code Adam

On April 30, 2003, the "Code Adam Act of 2003" became law. It requires that the designated authority for a public building establish procedures for a missing child in a federal building. On November 1, the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Protective Service implemented the policy nationwide and established procedures for locating a missing child in a federal building. GSA will administer this program nationwide in both owned and leased buildings. All associates are asked to familiarize themselves with the steps to take when an alert is announced that a child is missing. For more information, go to <http://www.gsa.gov/codeadamalert>.

Of the GSA centers eligible for NAEYC Accreditation, 76% are now accredited.

Congratulations to the following centers on their recent reaccreditation:

- * Commerce Kidz, DC
- * US Kids, DC
- * Sunny Days, Riverdale MD
- * Lutheran General Children's Day Care, Des Plaines, IL
- * Dirksen Baby Nursery, Chicago, IL
- * Little Acorns, Jackson, MS
- * Day Nursery, Indianapolis, IN
- * Childtime, Cincinnati, OH
- * Cradle to Crayons, Olympia, WA



Congratulations to the following centers on their recent accreditation:

- * Diplotots, Washington, D.C.

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(For additional copies call 415-522-3472)

Contributions and Comments on Center News are welcome and encouraged.

Playground News

Cradle to Crayons in Olympia, WA, recently underwent a renovation of their Infant/Toddler playground. The new outdoor space includes a rain shelter for those Pacific Northwest rainy days, a sandbox, playhouse, crawl tube and bridge. The surface is poured in-place rubber and the area was finished off with natural setting landscaping. Cradle to Crayons cares for 55 children and just received their first re-accreditation.



before



after

Parents and center staff are encouraged to check the following website regularly: www.recalls.gov