

Center News



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A Newsletter for Federal Child Care Centers

Winter 2003

The GSA nationwide network of child Care coordinators

New England Region
Sherril Edwards
617-565-7312

Northeast/
Caribbean Region
Sidny Lincoln
Cora Zoccolongaro
212-264-0512 or 0514

Mid-Atlantic Region
Robyn Major
215-656-5897

Southeast Region
Janie Heisner
404-331-4729

Great Lakes Region
Connie Chinn
312-886-0611

Hartland Region
Barbara Daniels
816-823-2215

Southwest Region
BJ Upton
817-978-8451

Rocky Mountain Region
Jacki Flinn
303-236-8014 x 264

Pacific Rim Region
Lyvette Norris
415-522-3350

Northwest/
Arctic Region
Jennifer Bashford
253-931-7700

National Capital Region
Pat Brown
202-205-7255

GSA's 14th Annual Child Care Conference



Plan to join us for the 14th annual child care conference sponsored by the General Services Administration on **July 22-24, 2003 in Denver, Colorado.**



The program will begin Tuesday evening with the gala reception and Cornerstone Awards and end after a full day on Thursday. Experts in the field of early care and education and Government professionals will address key issues and provide training that is directly related to the work of child care center staff, administrators, boards of directors, facility and security managers and Federal agency representatives.

The "save the date" cards have been mailed to those of you on our mailing list. If you did not receive a card and would like to be on the mailing list please contact Ms. Sue Dixon at: 202-501-3965 or by email at: susan.dixon@gsa.gov You will be able to find news and updates about the conference on our website at: www.gsa.gov/childcare.

GSA and US Army Partner for Affordable High Quality Child Care for Active Duty Army Personnel

Eight centers in the GSA network have been selected to serve as pilot sites for the Soldier/GSA Child Care Subsidy Initiative, a joint effort between GSA and the US Army to serve active duty army personnel. The Army, seeking to serve more of its soldiers than can be served on existing military bases has decided active duty personnel, including the guard and reserves, will be able to use GSA centers at the military tuition rate. Providers are refunded the difference between what the soldier pays and the actual rate at the center.

The participating centers are: Fedkids - NY, Albany - NY, FAA College Park- GA, AFC Atlanta -GA, Summit Atlanta-GA, Little Eagles Seattle-WA, Growing Years Seattle- WA, Fort Snelling, MN.

We will be adding more sites in the very near future. Your regional child care coordinator will give you more information if your center is identified as an army partnership site.

National Capital Regional Child Care Coordinator Retires

Joy Guenther, the Regional Child Care Coordinator in the National Capital Region (NCR) retired from GSA January 30, 2003, after four years with the GSA program coming to us from the Military child care program.

Joy is planning to continue working in the field of early care and education

offering her expertise in a number of private consulting ventures. We wish Joy well and are hopeful our paths will cross again.





Kevin's Corner

I will never forget when we moved into our house when I was eight years old. My brother, and I were going to “bunk” in the top room of the new house. We were excited. We were going to call it “the club.” My mother lovingly wallpapered it. Within three days of her triumphant completion, my brother had crayoned a battle scene all over the wallpaper. I distinctly remember how bitterly my mother wept.

Hers was a sorrow that is repeated, undoubtedly every day, even by some GSA Building Managers. Even if children don't draw all over the walls like my creative little brother, they touch them incessantly and get them dirty! The answer is of course, an appropriate wainscot material.

In the past, washable vinyl wall coverings have been used to protect walls from excessive creativity or other forms of unwanted marks and smudges. The problem is that vinyl wall covering is made of chlorinated plastic, which we try to avoid around young children to the extent possible. Also, vinyl wallcovering does not protect walls from impact and dents. Harder surfaces such as Acrivyn (which contains vinyl) and sprayed coatings have similar environmental drawbacks.

We are continuing our research in this area. We have proposed a number of possible wainscotings as better environmental choices such as washable paint, and linoleum used on the walls. If the wainscot is topped with a smooth, minimally projecting metal trim, large magnets are easily used to display artwork in a way that does not damage walls. Such a metal “border piece” can also be used to separate a field of glossy, washable paint that extends to the floor from the satin, eggshell, or flat paint used above it, (out of children's normal reach). It is important **not** to use high-gloss paint everywhere as it accentuates any minor flaw in the wall, making it appear a glaring imperfection. But on the limited area of the wainscot, this will not be the case, especially if it is covered with magnetically hung, wonderful children's drawings!

Early Literacy Resources

Start Early Finish Strong: How to Help Every Child Become a Reader

<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/startearly/>



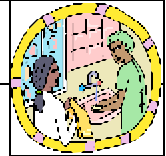
Child Care READS! Child Care Action Campaign <http://www.childcareaction.org>

Teaching Our Youngest: A Guide for Preschool Teachers and Child Care Providers: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/teachingouryoungest/>

Helping Your Child Become a Reader

<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/Reader/index.html>

Update on Hand Hygiene



A recent Centers for Disease Control (CDC) report stated a preference for the use of alcohol-based gel, liquid foam hand sanitizers in health care settings. This announcement created some confusion in the early childhood community, with some professionals assuming that the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers could replace handwashing as a health procedure. In an article for Child Care Information Exchange, Dr. Sue Aronson provides clarity to this debate pointing out that hand washing with soap and water remains the option of choice in early childhood centers. She reiterates, “Caregivers and children in child care should wash their hands with soap and water in each of the situations listed in Caring for Our Children Standard 3.020 and whenever their hands are visibly dirty or soiled.”

- * Upon arrival for the day or when moving from one child care group to another;
- * Before and after eating, handling food, or feeding a child; giving medication; playing in water that is used by more than one person;
- * After diapering; using the toilet or helping a child use a toilet; handling bodily fluids from sneezing, wiping, and blowing noses, from mouths, or from sores; handling pets and other animals; playing in sandboxes; cleaning or handling garbage.

The Real Dirt on Antibacterial Soaps

At the annual meeting of the Infectious Diseases Society of America the results of a year long hand washing study were shared. Antibacterial soaps are no better than regular soap. Participants' hands were cultured for germs at the beginning and at the end of the study. At the outset, all participants hands were teeming with 800,000 to 1 million bacteria. “That's normal”, said Elaine Larson, the studies author. “People can have up to 10 million on their hands.” By the end of the year, tests revealed that they had just 300,000 or so. It didn't matter whether they used antibacterial soap or not. The difference was that they were taking more time to wash their hands thoroughly, particularly the fingers, which come in contact with the most foreign objects during the day. Why don't antibacterial soaps do better? “The antimicrobial agent triclosan requires several minutes of contact to work says Dr. Stuart Levy of Tufts University, author of “The Antibiotic Paradox”. “Most people wash their hands for three to five seconds. “

FINANCING AN EARLY CHILDHOOD CAREER

Research has consistently found that the formal education of staff is one of the key indicators of high quality in early childhood programs.¹ However, most practitioners are parents, under-educated and under-paid. The extremely low wages paid in the field of early childhood mean that the early childhood workforce is particularly challenged to pay the relatively high cost of formal education. Beyond a program's own budget allocations for professional development, there are a variety of external funding sources available to early childhood practitioners.

FEDERAL STRATEGIES

- Federal Pell Grant - a needs-based award to help first-time undergraduates pay for their education after high school. To determine eligibility, the U.S. Department of Education uses a standard formula to evaluate the information reported on the applicant's Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The maximum amount for the 2002-2003 academic year is \$4,000.
- Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant - an award for undergraduates with exceptional financial need. The amount ranges from \$100-\$4,000 depending on need, and other factors.
- Federal Perkins Loan - a low-interest loan for first-time undergraduates. The amount received depends on the student's financial need, the amount of other aid received, and the availability of funds at the institution.
- Federal Stafford Loan - a low-interest loan made to both undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at least half-time. A subsidized Federal Stafford Loan is based on financial need. The government pays the interest during in-school and deferment periods. An unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loan is not based on financial need. The student is responsible for paying the interest from the date the funds are disbursed.
- Hope Scholarship and Lifetime Learning Credits - an option available to some taxpayers to claim a credit against their federal income tax liability for tuition and related expenses paid. The maximum amount of the credit for a taxable year is \$2,000.
- Child Care Provider Loan Forgiveness Demonstration Program - a program funded for Fiscal Year 2001 and 2002 intended to bring more highly trained individuals into the early childhood profession and to retain providers. This federal loan forgiveness program requires that a borrower have received an associate or bachelor's degree in early childhood education and have worked full-time for two consecutive years as a practitioner in an eligible child care facility that serves a low-income community. (*through the Department of Education- FY 03 funds were requested*)

STATE STRATEGIES

- T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) - a program begun in North Carolina and currently implemented in 22 states that provides scholarships to practitioners to help pay for tuition, books and transportation. When practitioners complete educational goals, they receive either a bonus or a salary increase. In return, they commit to stay at their programs for at least one additional year. In most states, eligibility is determined in part by a salary cap (an eligible practitioner must earn less than \$15.00 an hour). State programs are operational in: AL, CO, FL, GA, HI, ID, IN, IL, KS, MI, MN, MO, NC, NE, NY, OH, OK, PA, SC, VA, WA, WI
(www.childcareservices.org/TEACH/T.E.A.C.H.%20Project.htm)
- Early Childhood Apprenticeship Program - a program funded by the Department of Labor and implemented in several states designed to allow an entry-level practitioner to attain college credit and an early childhood credential while working in a child care center. Each apprentice is also assigned a skilled and compensated mentor.
- The Kentucky Early Childhood Development Scholarship - an initiative that provides professional development for child care staff and trainers in Kentucky.
- Massachusetts Workforce Training Fund - a program to provide resources to MA businesses to train current and newly hired employees.
- Illinois Debolt Teacher Shortage Scholarship - a scholarship program for academically talented undergraduate and graduate students, with priority given to minority students, to pursue careers in education.

1. Bowman, B., Donovan, M.S., & Burns, M.S. (Eds.). (2000). *Eager to learn: Educating our Preschoolers*. Washington D.C: National Academy Press.

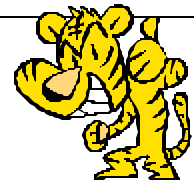
Research Notes

Published by the Center for Early Childhood Leadership, National Louis University

<http://www2.nl.edu/twal/>

Of the GSA centers eligible for NAEYC Accreditation, 81% are now accredited.

Congratulations to the following center on their recent accreditation:
Gold Creek Child Development Center, Juneau Alaska



Sound Start, Philadelphia Achieves 4 Star Quality

The Sound Start Child Care Center in Philadelphia has received a 4 star rating in the Pennsylvania Keystone Stars program. Keystone Stars recognizes child care providers who consistently excel in meeting or exceeding health and safety licensing regulations. The program is built on a four star rating system, with the highest level reflecting standards similar to the accreditation standards developed by NAEYC.

The Keystone Stars program is a voluntary program and awards providers who meet the star requirements with financial merit awards. The amount varies by the size of the center and the star designation. The average award for a 2 star rating is \$9,600, \$13,000 for 3 stars and \$16,000 for a 4 star rating.

example of a metal wainscot strip as explained in Kevin's Corner (see page 2)



right-brain, left-brain marketing

“Guerilla Marketing” by Jay Conrad Levinson (New York: Houghton-Mifflin, 1998) has recently been updated. This book is packed with practical marketing ideas, many of which can be applied in the early childhood setting. For example, Levinson shares the following idea: right-brain, left-brain thinking:

Studies reveal that 45% of Americans are left-brained and react to logical appeals while ignoring emotional appeals. Another 45% are right-brained and are stimulated by emotional appeals, disdaining logic for the most part. The final 10 percent are balanced. Because most marketing is created without regard to this psychological reality, nearly half of mass marketing is wasted. Many marketing campaigns aim in the opposite direction of about 50% of a potential audience. As a guerrilla, you can hit 100% of the people to whom you market if you aim your marketing at both left and right-brained people. Left-brained people love logical, sequential reasoning. You offer them a brochure with ten reasons to buy from you and they'll read every word. Is that good? Not necessarily. Since half the population is left-brained and half is right-brained, you're missing half of the market. Those right-brained people, who are influenced by emotional aesthetic appeals, have zero interest in your ten reasons to buy. So create a brochure with gorgeous graphics and words that tug at their heartstrings. Is that good? Not necessarily, because such a brochure would miss out on all those left-brained people who don't care a whit for pretty pictures and mushy words.

Guerrillas, therefore, are very careful to aim their marketing materials at both left brained and right brained people. They know that their target audience is left-brained and right-brained. So they put forth both logical appeals blended with emotional reasons. Nobody is overlooked. Their brochures have both the ten reasons to buy plus the appeals directly to the heart. This is not a big deal, but the losses suffered by ignorance of this aspect of human behavior are a humongous deal.

*This article was taken from ExchangeEveryday
<http://www.childcareexchange.com> For more ideas on marketing, go to the Exchange Article Archives of the Child Care Information Exchange magazine web site.*

GSA Office of Child Care

**WWW.GSA.GOV/
CHILDCARE**

National Director
Eileen Stern
212-264-8321

Deputy Director
Frank Kirchoff
212-264-1268

Kevin Kelly
202-208-7656

Sue Dixon
202-501-0287

Nancy Norris
404-331-1851

Jill Rhea
215-656-5994

newsletter
Liz Themas
216-522-4963

Cecilia Tracz
415-522-3472
(formatting, graphics and printing)



Contributions and Comments
on Center News are welcome
and encouraged.