

WCFCCA Newsletter

Spring 2011
Volume 4, Issue 1



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Dear Providers

It's tough to think about Spring with several feet of snow still on the ground, but you certainly don't have to wait until spring to do some spring cleaning. Tackle a small project each day to help pass the rest of winter. Break large tasks—like organizing an entire closet—into smaller ones (one shelf each day) and invite the kids to help you. Organizing incorporates math, classification, and life skills for the kids...and they LOVE it. Use empty wipe containers or jars to store items; plastic bins with latches are handy, too. If you're anything like me, the sense of accomplishment of being organized and having tackled these projects before Spring will help beat those winter blahs (and give you more time to enjoy the nice weather that is long overdue).

Upcoming Events

All trainings are held on Tuesday nights from 7-9PM at the St. Michael Community Education Building. Trainings are FREE for members, \$18 for non-members. RSVP in ADVANCE by calling (763-463-5909) or e-mailing us; non-members must register through CCR&R at 1-877-311-2244.

Tuesday, March 8, 7:00 p.m.

Banquet

(Beef O'Brady's, Monticello, MN)

Please join us for our 1st Annual Banquet to celebrate another awesome year! We will honor the 2011 Provider of the Year Nominees, thank our volunteers, and simply enjoy a fun night with each other. Non-alcoholic drinks and appetizers will be provided; you may purchase additional food.

Must RSVP by March 4th. Members and POY nominees only, please. ☺

Saturday, April 16, 7 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.

Wright County Early Childhood Conference

Monticello Community Center

Earn 6 hours of training and have plenty of time to socialize, shop, and dine with fellow childcare providers! More shopping time, catering by Russell's on the Lake, more vendors, and a larger raffle are some features of this year's conference. Katy Smith is our Keynote Speaker and there are 8 trainings from which to choose. HURRY as spaces are limited and we sell out each year! Online registration is available now:

www.wcfcca.org/conference.php.

Friday - Saturday, April 29-30

MLFCCA Provider of the Year Conference (Sugar Lake Lodge, Grand Rapids, MN)

MLFCCA's 23rd Annual Conference promises to be their most exciting one yet! You can get more info & register at www.mlffca.org

Tuesday, May 17 - Training

Little Kids, Healthy Bodies (Sarah Mulso)

Learn ways to encourage healthy and nutritious choices for children, what little kids need to be healthy, and more.

Tuesday, March 22 - Training **Science A - Z (Sarah Mulso)**

Do you hit a roadblock as you try to think of something engaging to include in your science area for various themes? This session will cover themes from A to Z and include items and activities to interest your eager little scientists. Hands on experiments will also be included.



*Whether you're
a childcare
provider
looking to
improve your
program, a
family
searching for
childcare, an
advocate for
better
childcare, or
anyone with a
question, we
are here to
help you.*

Provider Appreciation Day

Provider Appreciation Day is May 6 this year! Each year our governor signs a proclamation recognizing childcare providers in our state. According to <http://www.providerappreciationday.org/about/>, "Provider Appreciation Day is a special day to recognize child care providers, teachers and other educators of young children everywhere. Started in 1996 by a group of volunteers in New Jersey, Provider Appreciation Day is appropriately celebrated each year on the Friday before Mother's Day. The founding organizers saw the need to recognize the tireless efforts of providers who care for children of working parents. Momentum and support for this event has grown each year and recognition presently includes individuals and government organizations throughout North America, Europe and Asia. A national study, The National Economic Impacts of the Child Care Sector, sponsored by the National Child Care Association, found that there are at least 2.8 million people who earn their money by teaching and caring for young children or by working in directly related jobs. As the demand for child care continues to increase, who's minding the kids is crucial.

"Today's child care professionals are the world's unsung heroes. This profession is one of the most underpaid occupations in the country; yet research shows that early childhood is the most critical developmental period in a child's life. It takes a special person to work in this field and the contribution these individuals make to the quality of children's and families' lives too frequently goes unnoticed. Provider Appreciation Day offers a unique opportunity to recognize and commend the unselfish dedication, commitment and compassion that child care providers demonstrate every day."

T.E.A.C.H. Grants

The T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education And Compensation Helps) Early Childhood® Project was developed to upgrade the level of education of those working with young children by making the educational process affordable, increasing wages and reducing turnover. T.E.A.C.H. can pay for college tuition and books, travel, substitute services, and a bonus. T.E.A.C.H. also has a program to offset much of the cost of the CDA (Child Development Associate) assessment fee. (Another program offering financial support and guidance with an advisor to earn the CDA credential is also offered by CCR&R and is called the Minnesota CDA Support Project, call 651-641-6653 for more information). For more information, please visit <http://www.mnchildcare.org/TEACH/index.php>

New Members

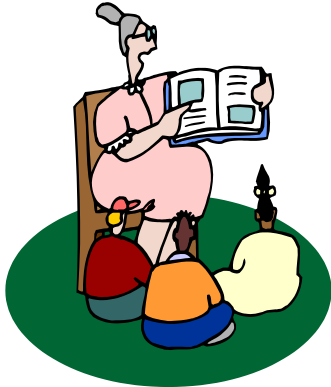
We welcome the following new members to WCFCCA:

*Jennifer Fischer, Otsego
Rhonda Tomlinson, Otsego
Paula Milbrat, St. Michael
Mindy Erickson, Waverly
Cynthia Horsch, Annandale
Kim Hansen, Monticello
Helena Overcash, Otsego
Alison Schuller, Otsego*

New members can join online at <http://www.wcfcca.org/register.php>

Network and Support

Providing childcare can be very isolating. We typically are the only adult in the home for many hours each day. It's very important to take good care of yourself so you can provide the best care possible. WCFCCA offers the opportunity to meet other childcare providers through trainings, social and other events. Other childcare providers understand what you are talking about - they live it every day too. It can be very helpful to join listservs or online groups for childcare providers. You should also take good care of yourself - eat properly, don't just snack on junk food throughout the day because it's there - throw it out and make good food such as fresh fruits or veggies easy to eat. Make sure you get enough sleep and meet your family's needs before pouring all your energy into your childcare. Your business needs to work for you and your family! That was probably one of the primary reasons you opened your childcare, don't forget it. ☺ When you take good care of yourself, you are in the best position to take good care of others as well.



“Too often we give children answers to remember rather than problems to solve.”
 ~Roger Lewin

Volunteer Opportunities

There are several opportunities to volunteer with WCFCCA. We welcome volunteers to help plan and prepare for the conference in April. We need help stuffing folders, folding napkins, setting up during the conference, and taking down everything afterwards. Any help is appreciated! If you have a special talent or area of interest or a desire to serve in a leadership or committee role, let us know what you'd like to do! We also need volunteers to host Provider Parties throughout the year.

Building Quality: Making Good Things Better

All child care providers are encouraged to complete the new Building Quality Checklist in order to create an individualized plan for new learning. Child care providers may access CCR&R grants, training, and consultation as they put their Building Quality Plan into action. There is no application process: simply complete the checklist and create your plan.

Across the state, a group of 200 qualifying child care providers will receive In Depth Building Quality Supports. Additional grant dollars, low-cost training, consultation and advising will be made available to these providers. There is a short application process involved in becoming a Building Quality provider. Please consider becoming a Building Quality program and taking advantage of these in depth supports. Please note: local availability of these supports is limited. Please apply early if you wish to participate.

Please find application materials and the Building Quality Checklist by visiting www.mnchildcare.org or by calling 800-284-3040.



FREE CDA Training Available

Child Care Resource & Referral is offering up to 90 hours of free training toward your National Child Development Associate Credential.

YOU may be eligible if you care for infants and toddlers and have completed at least 30 hours of CDA training. All Eager-to-Learn courses count toward CDA training hours.

Apply now! Applications will be accepted, until all funds are awarded, through June 30, 2011. To learn more and apply: contact Linda Magel at 651-290-9704, ext. 108 or email her at lindam@mnchildcare.org.



Wright County Family Child Care Association

Early Childhood Conference

Saturday, April 16

7 AM – 3:45 PM

Monticello Community Center

SCHEDULE

7:00 – 7:50 AM	Registration/Continental Breakfast/Vendor Shopping
7:50 – 8:00 AM	Welcome & Announcements, 2011 Provider of the Year Award
8:00 – 10:00 AM	Keynote: Katy Smith, <i>“What’s Up with Minnesota Families?”</i>
10:00 – 10:15 AM	Vendor Shopping/Break
10:15 – 12:15 PM	Workshop I
12:15 – 1:45 PM	Lunch/Vendor Shopping/Massages/Raffle
1:45 – 3:45 PM	Workshop Session II

Workshop Sessions

You will receive your training certificate at the end of each session

- A Media & Children (*Katy Smith*)
 - B Positive Discipline (*Joyce Flynn*)
 - C Record-Keeping & Tax Preparation (*Tom Copeland*)
 - D Leaping into Literacy and Math (*Julie Torkelson*)
-
- E Better Boundaries with Parents (*Katy Smith*)
 - F How Many Times Do I Have to Tell You? (*Joyce Flynn*)
 - G Marketing Your Business (*Tom Copeland*)
 - H Music with Children (*Toni Csargo*)

BREAKFAST: Muffins, Fresh Fruit, Orange Juice, and Coffee (courtesy of Costco & Caribou Coffee)

LUNCH: Orange Almond Salad, Minnesota Wild Rice Stuffed Breast of Chicken, Roasted Rosemary New Potatoes, Honey Dill Carrots, Fresh Rolls, Cake, Drinks.

www.wcfcca.org/conference.php

Spring Crafts

Coffee Filter Flowers

Materials:

Washable markers
Coffee filters drip style
Green pipe cleaners
Water spray bottle

Directions:

Have children color the filters with the washable markers. Have them spray their filters two or three times with the water bottle. Watch for several minutes as the colors blend together. Let dry for about 30 minutes. Bunch up the filter and twist a pipe cleaner around the center of the filter. You can "plant" it in a small planter or upside-down cup.

Fly a Kite

A classic springtime activity! You can make a kite with paint stir sticks and a plastic grocery bag, or buy some from the dollar store. Wait for a windy day or "fly" mini kites by tying a few inches of string to the front of a fan with a tiny kite made from toothpicks and small pieces of paper or plastic.

Grass Animals

Materials:

Grass seed
Pantyhose
Spray bottle
Potting soil
String or rubber bands
Styrofoam cups
Decorations such as eyes, pipe cleaner for tails or ears (optional)

Directions:

Put about a cup of soil and about 1 T of grass seed into a section of pantyhose. Mix well. Tie off the pantyhose using string or a rubber band leaving a tail several inches long. Put ball of dirt and seeds on a cup with the tail dangling into the cup. Keep about an inch of water in the bottom of the cup and spritz with water several times daily. When the "fur" (grass) starts growing, the children can style or cut it as desired.

Itsy Bitsy Spider

The itsy bitsy spider climbed up the water spout.
(make thumb and pinky "climb" up)
Down came the rain, and washed the spider out.
(wiggle fingers and make a sweeping motion down)
Out came the sun, and dried up all the rain.
(circle arms around head like the sun)
Then the itsy bitsy spider, climbed up the spout again.
(make thumb and pinky "climb" up again)

Spring Ideas

Flower Fingerplay

From

http://www.perpetualpreschool.com/preschool_themes/spring/spring2.html

"First you take the seed and you plant it in the ground."
(Mime taking a seed and planting it in your other hand, balled up in a fist.)

"Next a rain cloud comes and waters all around."
(Keep fist with seed same, use other hand to simulate a rain cloud raining down on seed.)

"Next the sun shines brightly, without a sound."
(Keep fist with seed same, use other hand to shine down by moving fingers over seed.)

"And in just a few days... a flower is found!"
(Move fist with seed up through other hand and open like a flower. This is actually the sign for "new" or "flower.")

After kids are familiar with this poem, I have THEM be the seeds that I plant and water and shine on. When I tap them on the heads the first time as I say the first line, they drop to the floor as if they have been planted. I tap them on the heads again as I recite the last line, and they grow into beautiful flowers. I make sure to smell each one, just like a flower, and tell them how wonderful they smell and beautiful they are. This activity works especially well with 2-4 year olds.

Baby Bumblebee

I'm bringing home a baby bumblebee,
Won't my mommy be so proud of me,
(Cup hands together as if holding bee)

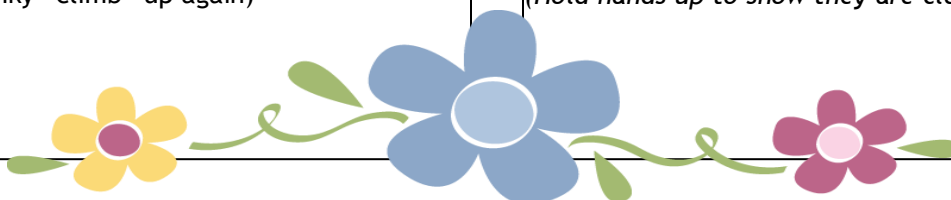
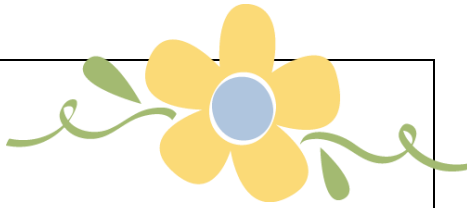
I'm bringing home a baby bumblebee,
Ouch! It stung me!
(Shake hands as if just stung)

I'm squishing up the baby bumblebee,
Won't my mommy be so proud of me,
(Squish' bee between palms of hands)

I'm squishing up a baby bumblebee,
Ooh! It's yucky!
(Open up hands to look at 'mess')

I'm wiping off the baby bumblebee,
Won't my mommy be so proud of me,
(Wipe hands off on shirt)

I'm wiping off the baby bumblebee,
Now my mommy won't be mad at me!
(Hold hands up to show they are clean)





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2011
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Community Center,
Monticello