



School Readiness Coalition Of Sarasota County, Inc.

Newsletter – July-August 2003

Hello to all Early Childhood Educators! This the third edition of a Newsletter to keep childcare providers informed of the activities of the School Readiness Coalition.

NEXT PROVIDER MEETING: AUGUST 19, 2003

OPAGGA, the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, is currently reviewing the progress local School Readiness Coalitions have made since being implemented in 1999. They are evaluating the effectiveness of the Coalitions and will be making recommendations to the Legislature by the end of the year regarding the future of the School Readiness Coalitions and their role in the implementation of the Universal Pre-K program. The OPPAGA team is coming to Sarasota the week August 18-22nd and would like to meet with providers to hear your ideas and input.

Join us for the next Provider Meeting to talk with the OPAGGA representatives

When: Tuesday, August 19, 2003 at 6:00PM

Where: Historic Spanish Point, 337 N. Tamiami Trail in Osprey (near Blackburn Point Road)

SUNRISE SKILL BUILDERS, FLORIDA PERFORMANCE STANDARDS, AND RESOURCE GUIDES FOR REFERRING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS ARE AVAILABLE NOW!

The Coalition has received its allotment of the Sunrise Skill Builder Books and recently purchased extra copies of the Florida Performance Standards for three and four year olds. We have also reprinted additional copies of the popular Resource Guide for Referring Children, a local guide to referring children who may need additional services to address a special need or developmental concern.

If you would like any of these items,
please contact the Coalition office at 379-1479 and place your order.
These items are free to Sarasota childcare providers on a "first come basis."
We would be glad to bring them to you if you cannot arrange to pick them up!
We will have copies available at the Provider meeting as well!

DON'T MISS OUT ON THE "WAGES" PROGRAM TO IMPROVE SALARIES AND BENEFITS!

Thanks to all of you who have submitted your survey. We have received over 80 so far... but we need at least 50 more to be able to go to the next step in the process through the Children's Forum! We must have results from at least half of our total providers to participate. Those of you who sent in your survey already will be the first ones eligible to participate. But we want everyone to participate, so if you have not sent it in, please do so now. It is not too late. The survey is also posted on the Coalition website for you to print out and send in! We will be calling providers throughout August to encourage the involvement of all of you! As we stated in our last newsletter, The School Readiness Coalition of Sarasota is committed to improving the salaries and benefits of our child care workers and would like to participate in a new statewide program that will be looking at ways to implement an educational and experience based bonus award program.

Please participate! Don't miss out!

Newsletter continued on the next page...Keep reading!

NEW PROJECTS TO BE IMPLEMENTED THIS FALL:

The Coalition will be starting a new project in the Fall conducting "pre/post" tests for three year olds using the DECA instrument, a strength-based tool which measures social and emotional factors, that in turn affect a child's ability to learn and do well in school. Training and materials for use in the classroom and with parents will be provided free to participating providers. More details will be provided at a later date in a separate mailing.

Community Volunteers to Help Providers

Are you in need of any repairs, painting, cleanup, or fixing up of your facility or play ground? Could you use assistance from a business mentor? Help with developing a parent involvement program? School Readiness Coalition of Sarasota County is putting together a volunteer program to assist you!!! In order for us to reach out to our community and match volunteers with providers, we need to know what you need. E-mail or fax to us your request and a staff member will contact you.



THANKS TO ALL WHO SUBMITTED THEIR MINI-GRANT REPORTS AND PICTURES!

We have received most of the reports and documentation on the mini-grants that the Coalition recently provided. For those of you who also sent pictures, they are wonderful. Thank you! We would love to post some of those pictures on the Coalition's Website if you can arrange for permission. Let us know if you have parental permission for those pictures to go on the website and/or in a Coalition flyer. (We will be posting a permission form on our website for you to use in the future). *There are still some of you who have not turned in your report. Please do so as soon as possible. We will be calling to remind you.*

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE FOR ANNUAL EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

If you are interested in attending the ECA conference in Orlando, September 19-20th, and are in need of a scholarship, they are now available through The Florida Center for Child and Family Development (formerly known as CDC-Child Development Center). Through a training grant they can assist you with this. Please send your completed registration form (available on the ECA website: www.ecaoffl.org) to FCCFD, 4620 17th Street, Sarasota, FL 34235, attention Mary Hettig. The Coalition will assist with limited scholarships once those funds run out.



Special note of congratulations to Coalition member, Beth Brown, for being the recipient of the Outstanding Advocate award from the FFCCHA- Florida Family Child Care Home Association!

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Our Website for the Sarasota School Readiness Coalition is now up and running! Minutes of meetings and scholarship applications are posted. A calendar of meetings will be posted, and also a section for you to exchange information and ideas. Look us up and give us your feedback. www.sarasotaschoolreadiness.org