



Early Learning Coalition
of Sarasota County

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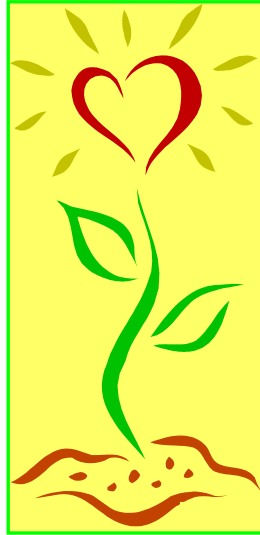
November 2006 Newsletter

Information for all Early Childhood Educators

DIRECTORS: PLEASE COPY BLACK & WHITE VERSION OF NEWSLETTER TO SHARE WITH TEACHERS!

SAVE THE DATE! 6th Annual Provider Conference is Saturday, January 27th

The Conference theme this year, **"Creating Classroom Communities that Support Social and Emotional Development,"** puts the focus back on the fundamentals. The goal of the conference is to give concrete, time tested ways to support children's emotional development and social competence, starting with setting up classroom environments and establishing routines that encourage positive behavior and build social skills. From activities at circle time that make children feel they are important members of the class to helping children learn how to cooperate and play together in the block area - every aspect of a preschool program can foster social and emotional growth. All teachers want children to experience the joy of learning, creating, and making friends, to feel that they are caring and capable people, and to know that they are valued members of the group. The Conference will address this theme in breakouts that will be relevant to teachers and directors at all levels.



Once again the Conference will be held at Pine Shores, but we will be able to use additional rooms, so this year will be able to accommodate everyone! This is a wonderful opportunity to come together, share experiences, and celebrate the important work of early childhood education! Registration material coming soon!



Hearing and Vision Screenings

If you need to schedule hearing or vision screenings please call Dianne Rose at 954-4830 ext. 3 for information.

Remember, it is a requirement that all children age three and older have hearing and vision screenings done each year.

It's MINI-GRANT Time Again

Mini-Grants are a great way to improve quality by getting needed materials and equipment. The Coalition is taking a different approach this year by asking providers to specifically describe how the items they are requesting will help their programs implement the **Florida Standards** for early learning. The State expects all child care providers to use the Standards as a reference to identify developmental goals for children and a resource to guide decisions about curriculum, materials and the classroom environment. Describing how materials requested in the Mini-Grants will help children develop skills identified in the Standards is a way to encourage providers to really look at the Standards and discover for themselves how much valuable and useful information they contain.

The Mini-Grant application is enclosed and includes information on who to contact with any questions about the Mini-Grants or the Standards. **We look forward to receiving many requests!**



Substitute Pool is Ready for Providers to Dive In!

The first STAR (Substitute Training and Recruitment) Program orientation meeting was held on October 25. Providers were able to ask questions, review the STAR Program handbook and sign up for program services. Starting October 30th participating providers who signed the Agreement for Service and Payment received a substitute list, and those **substitutes have already begun filling classroom positions.** All substitutes have received training, submitted all required background screenings and have signed all the state required documents. Participating providers can access the substitute list, hire substitutes onto their full time staff, and post permanent positions on the Coalition website. If you have questions, want to learn more, or would like to attend the next orientation meeting, please call 941-313-1304 or email Sandy Zook at szook@earlylearningcoalitionsarasota.org.





VPK NEWS

Important Reminder

The State requires monitoring of VPK classrooms. Every VPK provider should have received the **VPK Classroom Learning Environment Packet** and **Classroom Materials** list, along with the book, *Creating a Classroom Literacy Environment*. When VPK classrooms are monitored, teachers will be expected to have reviewed the classroom materials list and used the literacy environment book as a resource. The form that is used by the Coalition to monitor VPK classrooms is posted on the Coalition website, www.earlylearningcoalitionsarasota.org, so directors and teachers can check to see if their VPK programs are meeting the State expectations for quality.

Remember that Dianne Rose, Coalition Program Manager, is available to help teachers set up their classrooms and develop their VPK programs! She can be reached at 954-4830 ext. 3**

Dianne Rose will present additional **VPK Standards Trainings Part I** in the Resource Room for new VPK providers or those who missed previous trainings. The Standards training is mandatory for all VPK teachers. Space in the Resource Room is limited to 7, so sign up early. Call Dianne Rose, 954-4830 ext. 3



November 14th
December 5th
6:00 to 9:00 pm
ELC Resource Room
2886-B Ringling Blvd.
Sarasota

(in Gold Tree Plaza at Tuttle & Ringling, below the Child Care Connection)



Parent/Teacher Conferences

Some directors have asked for checklists they can use as a guide to help teachers prepare for parent/ teacher conferences. Here is a website that has simple developmental milestones for children at 3 months, 7 months, and from one to four years old: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/actearly/interactive/index.html> The checklists are not comprehensive, but are a good place to start. Parent/teacher conferences should be held at least once a year.



--- Resource Room News ---

New things are being added to the Resource Room all the time. Get ideas for lesson plans, circle time, transitions, activities, room arrangements, theme boxes, dealing with challenging behaviors, and more. Use the laminator and Ellison machine. Check out books and CDs. Stop by and see what all the fuss is about!

Resource Room is open:

Tuesday Noon to 4:00 pm

Thursday 3:00 to 7:00 pm

First Saturday of the month 1:00 to 3:00 pm

(941) 556-1600 ext. 118

resourceroom@earlylearningcoalitionsarasota.org

Just for Family Child Care Providers

All family child care providers who did not list any curriculum, or listed one that appears to be inadequate, on their self-assessment will be required to attend a mandatory special meeting on Thursday, November 30 to learn about the importance of having an appropriate curriculum and to get help on choosing a curriculum. Post cards confirming the details of the meeting will be mailed shortly. **An appropriate curriculum is a MUST, and we want to make sure all family child care providers meet this requirement.**



Visit our website! Minutes of meetings and scholarship applications are posted. A calendar of meetings is also available, as well as the community training calendar. Look us up and give us your feedback! If any director or teacher would like to receive a copy of this newsletter via email, contact the Coalition at the general email address below.

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Child Care Connection of Sarasota
 (Resource & Referral, Scholarship Child Care Program, VPK, Provider Payments)
 2886-C Ringling Boulevard Sarasota, FL 34237
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www.earlylearningcoalitionsarasota.org

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