

SAVE THE DATE! 7th Annual Provider Conference is Saturday, January 26th



"FEAR BUSTERS! Transform Teaching Fears into Confident Teaching" is the theme this year. Many early childhood professionals feel anxious or unsure about certain aspects

of their work or feel unprepared in some subject areas, and these fears can stand in the way of professional growth and development. **Knowledge** is the ultimate "fear buster." Understanding, insight, and information give teachers the confidence and courage to try an unfamiliar approach, incorporate a new activity (that may fall flat!), discuss difficult issues with parents or co-workers, or take on additional responsibilities. Only by going beyond the usual way of doing things and staying open to learning will teachers and educators realize their full potential and capabilities.

Although everyone has their own "teaching fears" this conference will try to touch on some of the most common - bearing in mind that even the most experienced teachers and directors can always learn something new.

A list of some of the breakout topics...

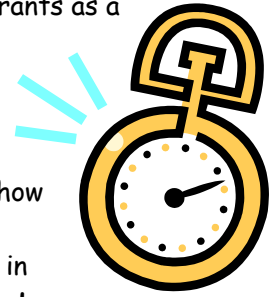
- incorporating developmentally appropriate math, science, blocks, gardening and sensory experiences into the classroom
- fostering meaningful communication with parents
- welcoming children whose primary language is not English
- creating a rich outdoor environment
- planning circle times that *really engage* children
- enhancing story time to promote language, listening, and critical thinking skills
- implementing curriculum activities geared to family child care providers
- sharing ideas on "successful mentoring" with directors

Once again the Conference will be held at Pine Shores, using both the Community Center and Classroom Building. We look forward to seeing many of you there, to share experiences together and to celebrate our vitally important work - **early childhood care and education!** *Registration materials will be coming soon.*



Mini-Grants and Standards

The Coalition offers Mini-Grants as a way to help providers acquire needed materials and equipment. Using the same approach as last year, Mini-Grant applications will again need to specifically describe how the materials requested will help children reach the skills delineated in the **Florida Early Learning Standards**.



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. Relating the Mini-Grants to the Standards is a way to encourage providers to really look at the Standards and reinforces the expectation that the Standards will be used in the classroom the way the State intends.

The Mini-Grant application and additional information on the Standards is posted on the Coalition website, www.earlylearningcoalitionsarasota.org, or you may email or call the Coalition to request a copy.

Mini-Grant applications must be postmarked no later than December 5th. A workshop on implementing the Standards will be held on Saturday, December 1st, (flyer attached) and those attending the workshop may ask questions about completing the Mini-Grant application after the presentations. *We look forward to receiving many requests!* ❖

Training Series just for Family Child Care Providers



WEDU-PBS approached the Early Learning Coalition about offering a training series PBS has developed in conjunction with its award-winning TV show, *A Place of Our Own*. The trainings, like the show, are designed to offer resources and concrete strategies to support those who care for children in their home.

After looking at the workshop topics and materials the Coalition is delighted to collaborate with WEDU in presenting this series of 6 workshops **just for family providers**. Participants will receive books, materials, video tapes, inservice hours, and *breakfast*, all courtesy of WEDU! Take a look at the attached flyer and sign up now if you are interested in attending. Space is limited!

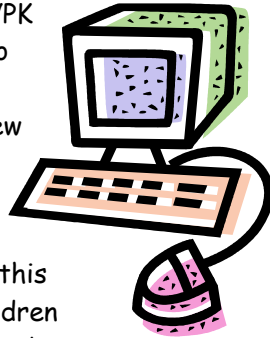


VPK NEWS

VPK Provider Verification Process

Those VPK providers that participated in the first year of VPK (2005/2006) remember the process the State established for verification of VPK information, one of the necessary steps to prepare the VPK Readiness Rate. That first year the Readiness Rate was not released until May 15, 2007. As promised, DOE (Department of Education) is doing everything possible to release the Readiness Rate much earlier this year, and hopes to send out letters the week of November 19th explaining the verification process and assigning passwords to providers that offered VPK in 2006/2007. The goal DOE has set is to **release the Readiness Rate in February 2008** for the 2006/2007 VPK year.

All providers that offered VPK last year are encouraged to log on to the Verification/Readiness Rate website, <https://vpk.fldoe.org>, to review the information for children in their program last year, and make corrections to the data, if necessary. The primary purpose of this verification is to ensure that all children who should be included within the readiness rate are included and have "substantial completion" of the VPK program. The Coalition will review and verify any changes that you make.



The Coalition works hard to ensure all VPK data on children and on attendance is entered correctly. However, we encourage you to review your data again and check for accuracy, as this process is not about payment issues. It is about **ensuring that your readiness rate is calculated by DOE correctly.** Please contact the Coalition for assistance or with any questions about the verification process. ***We are here to help!***



★ ★ ★ Upcoming Trainings . . .

Be sure to save the training flyers included with this Newsletter! You won't want to miss the **Building Better Behavior** and **DECA** series, and every teacher needs to know how to incorporate the **Florida Early Learning Standards** into their classroom lesson planning.

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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STAR Program now called **STRIDE**

The Substitute Training and Recruitment (STAR) Program is celebrating its one year anniversary and changing its name and logo, to avoid confusion with the Coalition's "Star" Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), scheduled to begin in January.

The new name for the STAR program is **Substitute & Teacher Recruitment, Development and**

Education (STRDE) Program,

pronounced **STRIDE**, since it is the goal of the program to assist child care centers, teachers and



substitutes to continue to take *strides*

forward in pursuit of their personal and professional goals. In the first year of the program from November 2007 to June 2008, 12 child care centers participated using 520 substitute days. **Since July 2007**, the program has grown to include **14 centers**, and these centers have used more than **300 substitute days!**

The STRDE program has introduced new talent to the early education field and assisted substitute candidates to pursue careers in early education. Two of the program's substitutes recently completed their 40 hours and are also pursuing their higher education goals. One substitute who has been with the program since its inception last November, Janice DePerna, has worked over 140 days and almost completed her associates degree in early education! Fatima Beltran has also worked over 140 days as a substitute and since beginning the program 8 months ago has chosen to pursue a CDA. Both have made great contributions to the program and we appreciate their hard work and dedication to early education.

At this time we have openings in the STRDE program only for centers in south Sarasota County. If you are interested in learning more please call Sandy Zook, STRDE Program Coordinator, at 941-313-1304 or email szook@earlylearningcoalitionsarasota.org.

Resource Room Bulletin

N~ If you haven't visited the Resource Room yet, you don't know what you're missing! There is a wealth of teacher resources and materials for the classroom to check out and also a laminator and Ellison machine. Drop by on **Tuesdays, noon to 4:00 pm**, or **Thursdays, 3:00 to 7:00 pm**. Call Dianne Rose for information or to arrange a visit outside of regular hours - 556-1600 x 118, or email resourceroom@earlylearningcoalitionsarasota.org. ***N~***

Child Care Connection of Sarasota
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