



Early Learning Coalition
of Sarasota County

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April 2007 Newsletter

Information for all Early Childhood Educators

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

CHILDREN'S WEEK in Sarasota



A big **Thank You** to all the centers and family child care homes that sent beautiful hand artwork to be displayed during Children's Week! The Coalition collaborated in the celebration this year with Sarasota County Libraries' Born

to Read program, and area libraries had displays of hands along with a flyer from the Coalition explaining the importance of honoring children and families and the need to advocate on their behalf. The Coalition's Child Care Connection mounted the **County Commissioner's Children's Week Proclamation** in the lobby along with a display of hand artwork (picture above) and gave gifts to parents and children from the Coalition and Born to Read. Many hands were also sent to Tallahassee to be part of the "Hanging of the Hands" in the Capitol Rotunda. **We appreciate all of you who participated by giving us a hand!**

Join Us In Welcoming Kerri Dieffenwierth!



The Early Learning Coalition is pleased to announce that Kerri Dieffenwierth will be joining the Early Learning Coalition as a consultant. As many Gold Seal Providers know, Kerri was the Accreditation Coordinator of the Sarasota Family YMCA Gold Seal Project, which ended in March. Through this new position with the Coalition Kerri will be able to continue to use her expertise to support directors in their accreditation efforts and will also assist directors through the Director's Connection meetings and other trainings targeted to their needs. We are delighted to welcome Kerri to the Early Learning Coalition team!

A Reminder to Directors >>>

Be sure to make copies of the Newsletter and Training Calendar to give to your teachers. A black and white version is enclosed and both are posted on our website, www.earlylearningcoalitionsarasota.org. We want everyone in our early childhood community to have access to this information.

Resource & Referral Survey Update

The R&R and Workforce Surveys were sent out January 5 and due back to the Child Care Connection by January 19. All providers who returned the survey by that date were promised a gift, and **126 providers** made it on time and received the **Circle of Children** pin as a thank you from the Early Learning Coalition. Data from the Workforce Survey is being entered now and will be shared with providers as soon as it is available. In order to be meaningful, data from all providers was needed. We appreciate your help in completing the survey.



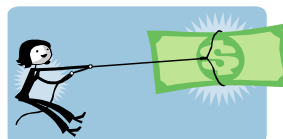
Substitute Training and Recruitment (STAR) Program

Child care providers in the Substitute Training and Recruitment (STAR) Program have used substitutes over 200 days since the program began almost 5 months ago. A comment from one of the substitutes shows what a positive experience this can be, "I greatly appreciate this and I am enjoying myself immensely! The kids and staff are **WONDERFUL!**" The center where this substitute was filling in needed someone while a teacher was on vacation. The director had this to say after her first couple of days working in the classroom, "She is doing just very well. She is professional and interacts well with the staff, parents and children."



Great substitutes like this are available to work throughout Sarasota County. All subs are given training, resources to use in the classroom, and have an employment file they bring with them containing all the state required documentation. Any questions, please call Sandy Zook at 313-1304 or email szook@earlylearningcoalitionsarasota.org.

For Family Child Care Providers **ONLY**



The **15th Annual Family Child Care Conference** will be held the end of June in Clearwater Beach. **Once again the Coalition will scholarship family child care providers who would like to attend this informative and fun event.** Scholarships will be for up to \$300. Watch your mailbox for the Conference application and don't miss out on this chance to learn and share experiences with other family child care providers.



VPK NEWS

VPK Provider Verification Process

March 16 was the deadline for VPK providers to verify children and attendance for the 2005/2006 VPK program. Eleven providers submitted changes and all changes were accepted by the Coalition. Most changes had to do with spelling of names, only two of the changes affected the readiness rate. **The latest news from DOE is that Readiness Rates will be released in April. We will keep you posted as we get more information!**

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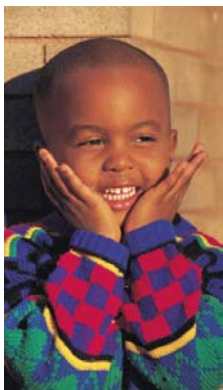
VPK Open Enrollment for Parents for this year's Summer Program and for 2007/2008 School Year program is up and running. **Please let parents know that they do not need to call or make appointments at the Ringling Office to register.** The **Child Care Connection** offers efficient **walk-in** service to parents. However, **to register in Venice or North Port parents will need to call Pam Waller at 486-2682 ext 112** to schedule an intake time.

Attention VPK Providers!

The Coalition assumes that current VPK Providers will continue to offer VPK in the 2007/2008 School Year. All VPK Providers will need to submit a new VPK Form 10 and 11 for each VPK Class along with the VPK Statewide Agreement. **All teachers must be approved by the Coalition, have appropriate education credentials and must have their level 2 background screening, including FBI fingerprint clearance, current within 5 years before they start.** Go to the Coalition website below and click on *VPK* for links to the VPK 10 and 11 and for the VPK Agreement, or call 954-4830 ext. 4 for information.

Transition to Kindergarten!

Making the move to kindergarten involves lots of changes for children. The enclosed **Pre-Kindergarten to Kindergarten Transition Checklist** is designed to give kindergarten teachers useful information from both preschool teachers and parents. Please read the cover letter for instructions and return the completed checklists to the Coalition. This is great opportunity to share information and reassure parents.



Are Child Care Centers Bad for Children?



Many of you have read or heard reports about a National Institute of Health-funded study that found that the more time children spent in center-based care before kindergarten the more likely their sixth grade teachers were to report such problem behaviors as "gets in many fights," "disobedient at school," and "argues a lot." This increase was small and did not show up in children who had less than two years of center-based child care by age 4½ - those children had exactly the level of problem behavior you'd expect for children of their age.

The study also found that children who had higher quality childcare had better vocabulary scores in fifth grade than those who had lower quality care, and that parenting quality was a more important predictor of child development than type, quantity, or quality, of child care.

The study authors suggested that the correlation between center care and problem behaviors could be due to the fact that child care providers often lack the training and the time to address behavior problems. Teachers may not be able to provide enough attention or guidance to the problems that may emerge in a group, such as how to resolve conflicts over toys or activities.

National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER) Director Steve Barnett noted that the study needs to be put into the broader context of research which shows positive effects for high-quality early care and education,



and added, *"If teachers systematically include social and emotional development as an essential part of the program, then children do develop better skills and behavioral outcomes."*

☐ **The bottom line is that this study affirms what we all know already:**

Quality child care does matter and an emphasis on social and emotional development is crucial. Children need skilled, caring teachers who create classroom communities that value each child.

To read more about this report visit

http://www.nichd.nih.gov/news/releases/child_care_linked_to_vocabulary_032607.cfm.

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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