

NEW TRAINING MODEL INTRODUCED



Teachers and directors put a lot of time and effort into improving their skills and expanding their knowledge. Trainings are useful when the material is relevant, meaningful, and actually put into practice. However, the gap between receiving information to implementation can be wide.

With that goal in mind, the Early Learning Coalition's Professional Development, Training and Quality Committee has adopted a new training model for early childhood teachers and directors focusing on four areas of **Core Competencies**: Child Development and Learning; Building Family and Community Relationships; Health, Safety, and Nutrition; and Program Management and Administration.

This new approach is intended to make trainings more useful to participants through strategies that foster a deeper understanding of concepts and encourage implementation in the classroom.

In the first phase, there will be stand alone trainings but many more that are presented as a series of 2 or more. A series allows the time to cover material more completely and in more depth which leads to greater comprehension and knowledge. All trainings will include a post/pre-assessment (where you compare previous knowledge with new concepts or skills learned) and a follow-up activity to be returned to the instructor. Research shows that immediate follow-up is essential to retain new skills and information and the assignments will also allow participants to incorporate the skills and concepts from the training into meaningful, hands-on activities in the classroom.

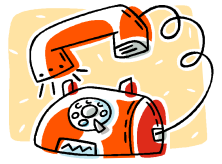
Another new feature is that directors will be asked to sign off on the follow up activities when teachers attend trainings. This will ensure that directors are involved in teachers' professional development and are aware and supportive of what is going on in the classroom.

In the second phase the core competencies will be covered at 4 levels, foundational to advanced, to fit the range of skills from beginning teacher to one with years of education and experience, information many have asked for!

The Coalition and its training partners are excited about this new approach, which is intended to help bridge the gap between learning in the abstract and practical application in the classroom.



USING THE **WARM LINE**



Enclosed with this newsletter is flyer describing the services available through the Warm Line and the number to call for assistance. The Warm Line is administered by the **Florida Center for Child and Family Development** through a contract with the **Early Learning Coalition** and is a service for **providers**, offering advice and assistance to child care personnel to support children in the classroom who have developmental delays, special needs or challenging behavior.

It is important to remember that **directors and teachers are the first resource and should carefully observe, document and assess a child to determine if onsite assistance is needed before calling the Warm Line**. This will ensure that children with the greatest need for additional services have priority. When given detailed information about the behavior that is of concern, the Florida Center can often make suggestions for activities and strategies to try with the child right away, before coming out to do an assessment. Sometimes making simple changes in the classroom environment or routine, or adding specific activities for the child can make a big difference, and further targeted intervention is not needed.

The more training and knowledge directors and teachers have the more effective they become in meeting the needs of all the children in their care.

Remember, no child should ever be asked to leave a center or family child care home without the provider first contacting the Warm Line for assistance. Every situation is not right for every child, but providers have an obligation to give parents suggestions on resources available in the community before asking that a child leave.

Just for **Family Providers** **Congratulations to Renee Hatfield,** **Provider of Distinction!**



Renee Hatfield was honored on October 4th as one of WEDU-TV's "A Place of Our Own" **Providers of Distinction**. WEDU honored six family child care providers from Sarasota, Pinellas, and Hillsborough Counties with a luncheon and awards ceremony in Tampa. Honorees received a plaque, gift bag, flowers, and a scholarship to a Family Literacy Conference in Orlando. Renee was chosen because of her unique and innovative infant/toddler program and her contribution to the community. Congratulations to Renee!





VPK NEWS

The 2008/2009 School Year VPK program is well underway with over **1,600 children** enrolled in VPK programs and the **Providers With Openings** list is posted on our website. Our goal is for VPK providers to be fully enrolled and for parents to find the program that best suits their needs.

VPK reminders:

- For VPK programs, **director's credentials** and the **FCCPC or CDA credentials** for teachers **must be current within 5 years**. Many directors and teachers have credentials that must be renewed by January 1, 2009. **There is no grace period** for directors or teachers with expired credentials. A full explanation of the renewal process and timeline is enclosed. Don't miss out - make sure your credentials are renewed on time!
- All **VPK Substitutes** must have a **current level 2 background screenings, including FBI clearance** to be in the VPK classroom. A sub may be in the classroom for a limited time without the minimum of a CDA, but must have the level 2 screening in place. The substitute policy should be used as a reference - it is posted on the Coalition website.

Announcing 2 Sarasota County VPK VIP*S! **Very Innovative Persons*

In the last newsletter we mentioned that Lisa Allen, Southwest Regional VPK Facilitator, was putting together a **VPK Newsletter** to recognize innovative VPK teachers in our region and provide a forum to share activities and strategies. The Coalition is pleased to announce that teachers from 2 Sarasota County providers were selected to be featured in the first issue, **Shawn Sellitti** from **Venice Nokomis United Methodist Child Care Center** and **Renata Munhoz, Angelina Guerrero, and Kim Rothenberg** from **Selby Preschool**.

Lisa Allen has told us that the Office of Early Learning liked this idea so much that they will be sharing it around the State! Be sure to take a look at the VPK Newsletter on our website's VPK page to see what's going on in these 2 great VPK classrooms. Next time we hope to have many more entries to share. **This is a great way to honor our dedicated and hardworking VPK teachers!**



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.

Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota County
Coalition Administrative Office
1750 17th Street, Unit K-1 Sarasota, FL 34234
phone 941.954-4830 fax 941.954-4831
mail@earlylearningcoalitionsarasota.org

Early Learning Coalition's Child Care Connection
(Resource & Referral, Scholarship Child Care Program, Provider Payments)
2886-C Ringling Boulevard Sarasota, FL 34237
phone 941.556.1600 fax 941.556.1606
www.earlylearningcoalitionsarasota.org

Sponsorship by Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota County, Agency for Workforce Innovation, State of Florida, Sarasota County Government



Super Kids + Super Care = Star-Bright Futures

INFORMATION & UPDATES!


There's a lot going on with the **Look for the Stars QIS** initiative in the next few months!


Two training series are underway, **NCircle**, for center directors (with teachers welcome to attend), and **Strategies for Quality Improvement**, for family child care providers. Both series take an in-depth approach to understanding the environment rating scales by examining the subscale areas item by item.

The purpose of these trainings is to give providers the information they need to understand the specifics and intent of the ERS assessments and the knowledge to implement the quality standards. Using the ERS tools as a self-assessment gives providers a framework to consider their own unique situations, weighing barriers to change against the benefits of finding solutions that fit their needs. When the second assessment comes around providers who have addressed areas that need improvement will be confident and prepared.

A **workshop for sites at the 3 Star level** will be offered October 27th and 30th and will provide guidance on developing a quality improvement plan and linking needs identified in the plan to Mini-Grants requests.

Provider Representatives for ELC Board

 The Coalition is recruiting a representative to fill the **center based private provider seat** on the ELC Board of Directors. Interested directors should refer to the recruitment letter included in this packet.

 Over the summer a new Faith Based provider representative was recruited. The Coalition is pleased to announce that **Lisa Williams**, director of **Suncoast Christian Academy** has been selected to fill this seat.

New Challenging Behavior Program

A new program to expand **Positive Behavior Support** throughout our early care and education community will begin in the new year. Experienced teachers and directors will be recruited to serve as "first responders" for addressing concerns with children in their sites and nearby ones. Extensive training, sub time and stipends will be offered as incentives. **Look for details on how to participate in the next few weeks!**