

Congratulations are in order for the following centers:

New Accreditations

- Magic Years, Richmond, CA

Reaccreditations:

- Government Center Child Care Corporation, JFK Federal Building, Boston, MA
- Government Center Child Care Corporation, Thomas P. O'Neill Federal Building, Boston, MA
- BSC Kids Place, Holtsville, NY
- Little Eagle Child Care Center, Martinsburg, WV
- Indianapolis Day Nursery, Indianapolis, IN
- Start Smart 4 Children, Indianapolis, IN

88%
of GSA Child Care Centers
are Accredited

Courtyard Kids Summer

This year, during the summer months of July and August, the children at Courtyard Kids packed their bags and rode on an "airplane," as they traveled to the distant lands of the seven continents! Creating individual passports complete with their pictures, each child traveled to Africa, Australia, South America, Europe, Antarctica, India, and of course, North America! Teachers created developmentally appropriate and extremely creative and imaginative lesson plans based on which countries they visited during the week. The children were introduced to new concepts and vocabulary, along with enjoying special activities, such as pizza making, karate lessons, an ice cream truck visit, and African music and drama with a special performer! We had a very exciting and fun filled summer!



BSC Kids Summer Days

We kept busy this summer with a variety of summer activities. We started our summer program off by inviting all the families to a "Summer Kick-Off BBQ" where a summer calendar of events was given to all the parents. Some events noted on the calendar included: all day water play, recycle/reuse day, show-n-tell, buying ice cream from the ice cream man, and music with Big Jeff. The weather this summer was incredibly nice, and the children were able to have water play every day. They went through the sprinklers, used the water tables and filled and dumped buckets of water. Summer days at BSC were FUN for everyone!



Sizzling Summer in Newark

At Newark Federal Kids Care, Newark, New Jersey, the children spent many days at the pool. They also found plenty of time for cooking and baking, and making their favorite food - Macaroni and Cheese! The Bears class enjoyed a Luau party where they learned to dance to hula music and had a limbo contest, but the most fun was had making a fresh and very healthy fruit salad. Thanks to the parents for contributing all the fruit for the party!



More Information

Contributions and Comments on Center News are welcome and encouraged.

Want to receive this Newsletter electronically? Sign up at : www.gsa.gov/childcare

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GSA Public Buildings Service
Child Care Division

Center News

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21st Annual GSA Child Care Training Conference

An exhilarated crowd of 440 people attended the 21st Annual GSA Child Care Training Conference held in Las Vegas, Nevada, July 13 - 15, 2010. "Winning the Challenge for Excellence," this year's theme, signified our collaborative ongoing commitment to providing high quality care to the federal families in the communities we serve. Jeff Neely, Acting Regional Administrator, opened the conference by welcoming guests to the Pacific Rim Region. PBS Deputy Commissioner, David Foley, recognized this year's 15 Cornerstone Award recipients for their outstanding contributions and support of the child care program.



During the opening luncheon, PBS Deputy Commissioner David Foley highlighted the achievements of the child care program and read a letter from President Obama that commended everyone for their dedicated service to Federal employees and citizens alike. Carol Weisman, author and trainer, intrigued the audience with humor and her thought-provoking message on "Raising Charitable Children." At a packed general session, Amy Roloff, former teacher and, now, reality TV star of "Little People, Big World," shared with the audience her story of "Overcoming Challenges and Obstacles" in everyday life.



The Child Care Division sponsors this training conference each year to provide up-to-date information on quality standards, and to recognize individuals and center excellence over the past year. The conference program is divided into five tracks, offering 25 breakout sessions specifically designed for child care directors, providers and teachers; boards of directors; facility, property and security managers; and Agency representatives.



Fourteen Child Care Programs were recognized for achieving accreditation from the National Academy for Early Childhood Programs, a division of the National Association for the Education

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BOARD'S BUSINESS

by Jill Rhea

It was great to see so many of you at the Child Care Conference in Las Vegas! One of the highlights was the sessions presented by Carol Weisman, President, Board Builders, Inc. Carol, very generously, sent us the following article and I hope that board members, and in particular, board presidents will find it helpful.

When a Board Member Leaves

What is the smartest thing a brave and fearless nonprofit executive can do when a board member is exiting the board? That would, of course, be to do an exit interview; and, yet, this is a rare occurrence. There is always a certain amount of dynamic tension between employee and employer. And it is somewhat unique that, in the boardroom, the executive, at times, functions as cheerleader, fundraiser, disciplinarian, coach and supplicant. After three, six, or frequently even more years of working together, there predictably tends to be one of three reactions to the departure of a board member:

1. A real sense of loss and the question, "How are we ever going to find someone that good?"
2. A deep sigh and a sense of opportunity that, "Now we can get someone really good."
3. Confusion and the question, "Is the woman leaving the tall redhead or the short blond? She didn't show up often enough for me to get to know her."

Whatever the reaction and whether the departure is because of the end of a term or because of personal or business reasons, the executive has a golden opportunity to learn and grow professionally, as well as ensure future positive involvement with the departing board member, by asking for a final meeting. You will want to have the meeting in a home or office that is private, as opposed to a busy restaurant or coffee house, where your conversation could be overheard. The questions to ask in this final meeting are:

1. Did we use your talents effectively?
2. If I can call you in the future, what issue should I consult you about?
3. What did you enjoy about your time on the board?
4. What would have made it better?
5. How can I improve as a leader?

Be ready to be open to listening. Try not to be defensive and send a thank you note, not only for the board service, but also for the time spent debriefing at the exit interview. And when the opportunity comes up to call upon a former board member, grab it.



Conference: continued from page 1

of Young Children. Linda Hassan Anderson, Senior Director of the NAEYC Academy, shared with the attendees the value of providing a high quality early childhood program and the efforts involved in achieving accreditation. Eight-eight per cent of eligible child care programs in GSA space are currently accredited. A special treat was Hap Palmer, accomplished musician and Parents' Choice Award recipient, as he entertained the audience with song and movement activities during the accreditation luncheon.

At the closing session, Carol Moore, RN, made us all laugh, focusing on how laughter can relieve stress and contribute to our health and wellness - a very positive send off message for the attendees.

As a leader in innovative, greener solutions, GSA did not print or distribute handouts at the conference. Handouts from this year's sessions are currently posted on our web site at www.gsa.gov/childcare. Click on For Professionals & Providers > Annual Conference > Child Care Conference Library.



Lead and Pottery: continued from page 3

present, but could be a telltale sign. Lead glazes are safe so long as they are properly formulated, applied, and fired.

Check your kitchen to identify risky items and ensure their use does not create health hazards:

- Avoid using raku-fired pottery for food or drink containers.
- Ceramic ware and glazes that are risky should not be used to store food or drink. The longer the food is in contact with such glazes, the more the lead will leach into it.
- Highly acidic foods (for example citrus juices, cut fruit, sliced tomatoes, cola, salad dressings, vinegar, coffee, and tea) should not be served in questionable china. Highly acidic wet foods leach lead the fastest, although any moist food should be kept out of suspect pottery.
- Dry foods like breads, crackers, tortilla chips, and whole fruits and vegetables can be safely served in them.
- Questionable china should not be used daily. Be wary of old coffee mugs, cheap, imported china and ceramic containers.
- Heating or microwaving questionable china should be avoided. Heat can accelerate the lead-leaching process. Reheating coffee in an old mug in the microwave is a particularly risky thing to do.
- Pay attention to labels that warn "Not for Food Use. May Poison Food," "Not for Food-Use. Glaze contains lead. Food Use May Result in Lead Poisoning," or "Not for Food Use -Food Consumed from this Vessel [Plate] May be Harmful,"
- Home testing kits for lead are available on-line or your local hardware store.



Eco-Healthy Child Care

Eco-Healthy Child Care Program Goes National

This fall, two leading programs to protect children's health in child care settings are merging. Since 2005, Children's Environmental Health Network's (CEHN's) Healthy Environments for Child Care Facilities and Preschools program (HECCP) and Oregon Environmental Council's (OEC) Eco-Healthy Child Care program (EHCC) have independently protected children's environmental health by educating child care professionals about toxic exposures and air quality issues within child care facilities. In October, the two will merge into one—the Eco-Healthy Child Care program—led by CEHN. OEC will continue to provide services to child cares in Oregon and serve as an advisor to the national program.

CEHN has been the voice for children's environmental health in the nation's capital since 1992, and the organization has managed its HECCP since 2004. HECCP has run in California, Georgia, Washington, DC, and Texas, and has supported over 3,000 children. HECCP is the only program in the nation that collects on-site pre and post environmental assessment data in child care facilities. Since 2005, OEC's EHCC program has endorsed child care facilities that perform self-audits and comply with 24 out of 30 best practices for environmental health. Both programs have been tremendous successes: they currently support nearly 2,000 child care providers that, together, care for nearly 65,000 children within 48 states, Canada, and Australia. EHCC has also received the EPA's Children's Environmental Health Excellence Award in 2006 and the 2009-2010 Childcare and School IPM Recognition Award from the IPM Institute of North America, Inc.

GSA Child Care Centers are 99% Eco-Healthy Child Care Endorsed!

Congratulations to the following centers on their recent EHCC endorsement:

- Innovation Station (PTO) - Alexandria, VA
- Little Explorers (NOAA) - Silver Spring, MD
- Clever Kids Learning Center - Ogden, UT

Lead and Pottery: Did you know?

Lead used in ceramic glazes can be a health hazard for potters, and for people using their products. A special concern is the intellectual development of young children.

The Eco-Healthy Child Care Program addresses this standard: To avoid possible lead exposure, we do not use imported, old or handmade pottery to cook, store or serve food or drink.

Lead is found in pottery glazes known as "lead bisilicate in frits." These glazes are mainly used on earthen and raku ware. If they are not properly formulated, applied and fired it is possible that they could leach into food or drink.

Lead glazes are most commonly used on earthenware, and on older bone china and porcelain. When the glazes are properly formulated

Merging the two prominent programs will allow for greater capacity to reach, educate and support thousands more child care professionals in preventing environmental health hazard exposure each year.

The national Eco-Healthy Child Care program is a science-based, practical initiative that trains child-care providers to create environmentally healthy facilities and offer services that will protect children from harmful toxics and air pollution—and then helps them implement changes that will help them realize this goal. When a provider commits to following the program's best-practices techniques, which are proven to reduce children's toxic exposure and improve indoor air quality, EHCC endorses the provider—and then promotes the endorsed facilities to parents to simultaneously reward our participants and help educate parents about environmental health issues.

EHCC's goal is to prevent and reduce adverse health effects from exposure to pesticides, household chemicals, lead, mercury, art supplies, treated playground equipment, furniture and carpets, radon, mold and mildew, plastics and poor indoor air quality in child care facilities across the nation, and we target on-the-ground child care providers, administrators, child care trainers, and child care licensing staff.

Since its inception, EHCC has conducted targeted expansion to nine states, offering extensive training and outreach to child care professionals in California, Colorado, Florida, Massachusetts, Maine, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, and Washington. This year, the program will target six additional states, including Idaho and Vermont. EHCC intends to expand into four to six additional states a year over the next four years. The EHCC national board of advisors ensures that EHCC remains relevant to all child-care professionals as the program grows. Any child care provider in the United States can access EHCC's free on-line resources, including the self-audit checklist and informational fact sheets, information about how to get endorsed, and a list of who serves on our national advisory board, at www.oeconline.org/ehcc.

and fired at a high temperature, the lead is sealed. However, if they are not properly prepared and fired, lead may leach into food stored in or on the ceramic ware. The degree of lead leaching from tableware can vary depending on how often the tableware is warmed and used, and the amount of contact it has with food and drink. Cups and bowls are of greater concern than dishes. Acidic foods will accelerate any leaching. The amount of lead released depends on how long the food and container are in contact. The only way to be sure a container is safe is to have it checked by a metal testing lab.

The FDA advises not using any pottery for food if the safety is questionable. Despite spot checks by the FDA, pottery that contains dangerous amounts of lead is still sold in this country; most is imported. You can't tell if the pottery is dangerous just by looking at it but dulled or cracked glazes, or designs painted on top of the glazes (you can feel a slight elevation), are clues. This does not automatically mean lead is

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