

Congratulations are in order for the following centers:

Reaccreditations:

- Rainforest Kids Child Development Center, Hato Rey, PR
- Just Us Kids, Washington, DC
- Fingerprints Child Development Center, Washington, DC

NAEYC
Accreditation

85%
of GSA Child Care Centers
are Accredited

Week of the Young Child Festivities - April 11-17, 2010

The Week of the Young Child is an opportunity for programs, NAEYC Affiliates, related organizations, communities, and states to focus on the needs of young children and their families. It is also held to honor young children and thank teachers and all those who make a difference in young children's lives. This year's theme was, "Early Years Are Learning Years," and virtually all of our centers participated in a wide range of activities during the week. Just a few of many events held:



Chaun Benjamin, Director of Facilities Management and Services Division, Region 10, read to a group of preschool children from Building Blocks Child Development Center in Auburn, Washington. Mr. Benjamin entertained the children with the story, "Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs," and then joined them for a spaghetti and meatball lunch.

FAA Little Flyers, in College Park, Georgia, kicked off a week of festivities with Reading Day, which was followed by Kite Day, an art



Toddlers and preschoolers at Kinderplatz in Fort Snelling, Minnesota, had fun decorating t-shirts, listening to a fascinating Finnish storyteller, and doing joint home projects together with their families.



At One Hope United Child Development Center O'Hare in Des Plaines, Illinois, "Meet the Author Day" featured Allison Ryan, author of the book, "Janey and Miriam Turn Five!," reading her story for the preschoolers and their parents.

40 Years of Earth Day Celebrations!

Children all around the country had a great time getting dirty and celebrating Earth Day on April 22, 2010. Here are some of the highlights...

The rain didn't dampen the Earth Day spirit at the Bannister Child Care Center in Kansas City, Missouri; they just moved the festivities indoors. Regional Administrator Jason Klumb opened the event by explaining the importance of Earth Day to the children. Then he and Regional Commissioner Mary Ruwwe joined the children in the planting activity.



Easter Seals Building Blocks Child Care Center, located in Auburn, Washington, planted vegetable plants and wild flowers in the children's playground.



Little Eagle Child Care Center at IRS, West Virginia showed their love for Mother Earth.



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GSA Public Buildings Service
Child Care Division

Center News

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Liz Themelis Selected as Director of GSA's Child Care Program

Liz Themelis, Deputy Director of GSA Child Care, was recently selected to be the new Director of the Child Care Division, succeeding Eileen Stern who retired in December 2009. One of the original start-up members of the GSA child care team, Liz has been with the child care program for the past 23 years. Having served in various regional and national positions, including Regional Child Care Coordinator for the Great Lakes Region, Liz has extensive experience in all areas of the child care program. Liz is also known for being one of the federal government's original telecommuting/flexiplace pilot employees, working full time out of her home office for the last 19 years. Prior to coming to GSA, Liz served in the Peace Corps from 1981-1983, teaching in central Africa. At the time she joined the Peace Corps, the Corps favorite slogan was "The toughest job you'll ever love," which Liz states also applies to both the child care field and parenthood. Her sincere passion and enthusiasm for her work is clearly evident, as she has frequently been overheard commenting that "Working in child care is the best job in GSA." Liz works and lives in Brecksville, OH with her husband and two (almost grown) children.



Congressman Cleaver Visits Corporate Kids

On April 8th, Congressman Emanuel Cleaver, II, visited Corporate Kids Child Care Center in Kansas City as part of the center's Parent Involvement Week. The Congressman was very happy to speak with a class of pre-schoolers about the most important issues facing them: why it is so important to listen to their parents and why they should never run off or leave the house without permission. His own words say it best about the day: "I cannot help but say the highlight of my week was telling a story about my neck tie to a four year old who asked what it was. We then topped a productive meeting with cake. Sometimes this job can really be a struggle, and then there are visits like this and it makes it all worthwhile. Thank you to some of my youngest constituents for a fantastic afternoon!"



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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

21st Annual GSA Child Care Training Conference: "Winning the Challenge for Excellence"

This year's conference will be held at the Paris Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada, July 13 -15, 2010. The conference begins at 4 PM on Tuesday, July 13 and ends at 5 PM on Thursday, July 15. By request, we will have a pre-conference networking session for Child Care Center Directors on July 13 at 2PM.

Featured speakers include Amy Roloff, wife and mother of 4, currently filming the 5th season of the TLC television show, "Little People, Big World;" Carol Weisman, MSW, CSP, internationally known speaker, author, trainer, and consultant specializing in volunteerism and fund-raising; Hap Palmer, MA, accomplished musician, singer/songwriter and educator; and Carol Moore, MS, RNC, Health Care Specialist, educator and speaker specializing in humor, laughter, and ways to cope with stress.

Hotel reservations can be made by calling the Paris Hotel at 1-888-266-5687. The conference rate is \$99.00 plus tax, single/double occupancy (each additional adult is \$20) and children 18 and under are free. When making a reservation, ask for the "GSA Child Care Training Conference" room block. The cut off date for hotel reservations is June 18, 2010, so please reserve your room early to ensure availability.

On Wednesday, July 14, 5:00 - 7:30 PM, we will offer tours of Children's Choice Learning Centers at the MGM Grand Hotel and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas Lynn Bennett Early Childhood Education Center. The cost is \$10 and is limited to the first 140 people that register for the tour.

Conference participants may register on line, by fax, or by mail. The conference brochure with registration information is available on our website at www.gsa.gov/childcare. For additional information, please call Nancy Norris on 404-331-1851.

Don't forget to register for University Credit and Continuing Education Credits with Portland State University at www.ceed.pdx.edu/gsa or use the link on our website.

Conference Registration fees are as follows:

	Early Bird before 6/18/10	Regular Rate after 6/18/10
Teachers/ Caregivers	\$250	\$265
Directors/ Assistant Directors	\$310	\$325
All others	\$375	\$390
Tours	\$10	\$10

BOARD'S BUSINESS
by Jill Rhea

Looking forward to the 21st Annual Child Care Conference!

The 21st Annual Child Care Conference is being held in Las Vegas this year, July 13 - 15, 2010. I don't know if you will have luck in the casino, but if your board comes to the conference you will certainly be a winner!

This year's board track is filled with just what you have asked for - presenters who are knowledgeable about GSA Child Care and our system. Arron Lindstrom will share his personal experience as the President of a GSA board, and help you identify strategies for dealing with board business, creating accountability on the board, and how to make your board a fun and rewarding experience. Past presenter Carol Weisman will be back to offer, in her own humorous way, "Transforming Ordinary People into Fundraising Superheroes" and "Recruiting and Orienting Your Nonprofit Dream Team." Bob Siegel, National Director of Easter Seals, will present a special session on Marketing that will focus on attracting Federal families to your center. There will also be a session on Strategic Planning that will give boards an action plan to achieve their goals.

I hope you will join us in Las Vegas for what is sure to be a wonderful conference and fantastic learning and growth experience!



Health Effects of Poor Air Quality

Air quality significantly impacts people's health. The health impacts from exposure to air pollution (indoor and outdoor) can include: decreased lung function, asthma, bronchitis, emphysema, and even some types of cancer. Children are particularly vulnerable to air pollution because their lungs are still developing and they breathe more air per pound of body weight than adults do.

Indoor Air Quality

Indoor air pollution is often 2-5 times greater than outdoor levels of air pollution due to a general lack of adequate air filtration and ventilation. The presence of dirt, moisture, and warmth encourages the growth of mold and other contaminants, which can trigger allergic reactions and asthma. Fortunately, there are many ways to reduce air pollution in both your indoor and outdoor environments.

10 Ways to Improve Indoor and Outdoor Air Quality:

1. **Do not smoke on child care premises or near children.** If you do smoke, wear a smoking jacket; remove it upon entering buildings.
2. **Do not idle vehicles.** Car exhaust releases pollutants that are harmful to health (especially to children) and the environment. Idling cars release even more pollution than moving cars.
3. **Prevent mold and mildew.** Reduce excess moisture by fixing leaks. Increase ventilation naturally by opening windows and using fans.
4. **Clean spills promptly.** For spills on carpets, clean and dry carpets ASAP to prevent mold growth.
5. **Prohibit the use of scented candles and artificial air fresheners,** which contain multiple chemicals, including dangerous solvents, to achieve their fragrance. Use diluted essential oils instead.
6. **Use biodegradable, least-toxic cleaning products** certified by Green Seal (www.greenseal.org) or EcoLogo (www.ecologo.org). Why? Many ingredients in cleaning products can make indoor air unhealthy to breathe, irritate the skin and eyes, harm the respiratory tract, as well as damage the natural environment.
7. **Use Integrated Pest Management (IPM)** procedures to manage pests. IPM is an effective, chemically free and environmentally sensitive alternative to pesticides used to control pests with the least possible hazard to people, property, and the environment.
8. **Seal all solvent, adhesive, paint, and art supply containers** and store in a well-ventilated area.
9. **Use non-toxic art supplies.** Make sure they are approved by the Art & Creative Materials Institute, Inc. (www.acminet.org) or designated AP Non-toxic, or CP Non-toxic.
10. **Remove classroom pets with fur or feathers.** Pet allergens can trigger allergic reactions and asthma.

Air Quality Resources on the Internet

- **Third party certifiers for biodegradable, least toxic cleaning products:**
www.greenseal.org
www.ecologo.org/en
- **Indoor air quality tools for schools:**
www.epa.gov/iaq/schools
- **Indoor air quality issues for child care facilities:**
www.azdeq.gov/ceh/download/indoorair.pdf
- **California Air Resources Board, School Health:**
www.arb.ca.gov/research/health/school/school.htm
- **American Lung Association**
www.lungusa.org/site/c.dvLUK9OoE/b.22542/k.CA6A/Home.htm
- **National Asthma Education and Prevention Program:** How asthma-friendly is your childcare setting?:
www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/lungasthma/chc_chk.htm
- **Integrated Pest Management:**
www.ipm.ucdavis.edu

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON EHCC

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Congratulations to Edward Zorinsky Child Care Center in Omaha, NE for receiving EHCC endorsement

Thanks to GSA's and our providers' commitment to making child care centers more environmentally-friendly, GSA Child Care Centers are now 96% EHCC endorsed. Just 4 more centers to go to reach our goal of 100% by 9/30/10.



Kite Day @ FAA Little Flyers Child Development Center, College Park, GA.

More Information

Eco-Healthy Child Care is a national program created by the Oregon Environmental Council to ensure that child care settings are as healthy, safe and green as possible by reducing children's exposure to toxins. GSA is proud to partner with the Oregon Environmental Council in support of child care centers going green. If you want to know more on the EHCC Program, contact your Regional Child Care Coordinator or visit www.oeconline.org/our-work/kidshealth/ehc



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LAS VEGAS, NEVADA JULY 13-15, 2010**