

WEST VIRGINIA

VOLUME 10 NUMBER 2 • SPRING 2009

EARLY CHILDHOOD  
PROVIDER

QUARTERLY

**Laying the  
Foundation for  
Leadership**

**Building Morale and Team Spirit**

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WV Early Childhood Provider Quarterly is a project of West Virginia Early Childhood Training Connections and Resources, a collaborative project of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources/Bureau for Children and Families/Division of Early Care and Education; Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health/West Virginia Birth to Three; WV Head Start State Collaboration Office; West Virginia Department of Education/Office of Special Education and is supported and administered by River Valley Child Development Services.

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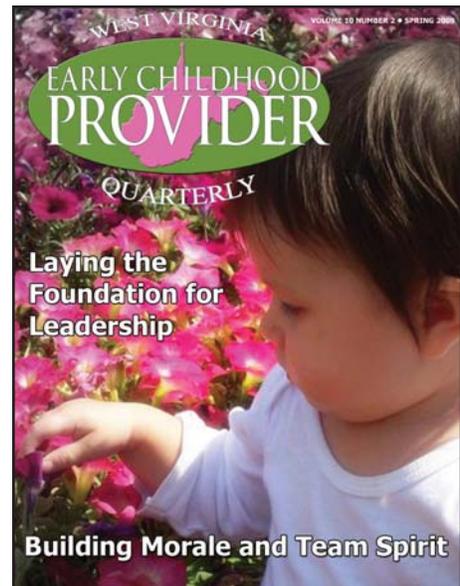
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## Celebrating Success:

# State Leaders Recommend Heightened Emphasis on Early Childhood Programming

## *Imagine West Virginia calls for enhanced child care and in-home visitation services*

Focusing resources on early childhood policies and programs--specifically for the birth-to-three age group--not only will produce a healthier population but will offer economic benefits to West Virginia in the form of a more competitive 21st century workforce. That is the focus of Imagine West Virginia's 2009 policy statement *Right and Smart: Advancing Early Child Development in West Virginia*.

Admiral T. Joseph Lopez, United States Navy (retired), the chair of Imagine West Virginia's Board of Governors, urges West Virginians to review the report and support its recommendations.

"Imagine West Virginia believes it is vital, even in these times of economic uncertainty, that we provide every West Virginia child with the best chance for a healthy, productive life," Lopez said. "It is both the right and smart thing to do. Our research clearly demonstrates that investments in quality programs for our youngest citizens will yield significant dividends, and over time produce economic benefits that will far exceed the cost of investment."

Former Governor Gaston Caperton, president of College Board and an Imagine West Virginia Board member, said the declaration speaks for itself.

"Early child investments are among the smartest economic development investments that any state can make," Caperton said.

Imagine West Virginia has distributed an open letter to state policy leaders urging their support of this issue and offering two specific, research-based recommendations that are part of a series of steps West Virginia must take to reach the ultimate goal of creating a cohesive, comprehensive plan for early child development.

The recommendations include:

1. Advance a system of early child care which is available, affordable, and adheres to a Quality Rating & Improvement System.
2. Create a comprehensive system of in-home family education across the entire state, providing quality parenting assistance both before birth and in the first years of life.

With more mothers joining the workforce to support their families and the number of West Virginia child care centers on the decline, access to quality child care that is accessible and affordable is critically important. West Virginia also must ensure families facing obstacles have access to high-quality home visitation services as part of a comprehensive and coordinated support system that nurtures their child's healthy development.

"Imagine West Virginia recognizes that West Virginia has received national recognition for its success with the state Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and in the adoption of a pre-

kindergarten for 4 year olds," said Sally Richardson, executive director for the West Virginia Institute for Health Policy Research and an Imagine West Virginia Board member. "However, we believe the state has a unique opportunity to continue such activity on behalf of our children and improve in other critical areas, such as the birth-to-three age group."

Imagine West Virginia prepared the report with the input and guidance of a number of people from health and human resources, higher education, non-profits, law, business and local, state, and federal governments. Dr. Calvin Kent of the Marshall University Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) and Barbara Gebhard of ZERO TO THREE were the principal advisors to the project.

Imagine West Virginia is a results-based policy institute of West Virginians serving West Virginia. Established in 2006 as an independent, nonpartisan, objective research and development entity, Imagine West Virginia is dedicated to identifying and investigating tough public policy issues and publishing well-reasoned, evidence-based recommendations that have the potential to transform the economy of the state and the lives of West Virginians.

The 2009 policy statement--Right and Smart: Advancing Early Child Development in West Virginia--can be found online at [www.imaginewestvirginia.org](http://www.imaginewestvirginia.org).

# ACDS Celebrates 20 Years!

Submitted by Enola Foust, ACDS Coordinator

It has been two decades since the registered Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist (ACDS) program began in West Virginia. Over 1,000 apprentices have graduated. In addition, over 800 sponsors and programs have benefited from the increase in professional child development specialists who remain committed and dedicated to serving children and families. What a tremendous impact this has had for over 10,000 young children throughout the communities and early childhood programs across the state in all 55 counties. West Virginia should be proud of the accomplishments, events and milestones ACDS has achieved. Here are a few of the program's major events and accomplishments for the last twenty years.



## 1989

Dana Daugherty, state director of US Department of Labor/Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training (USDOL/BAT), met with Norma Gray, executive director of River Valley Child Development Services (RVCDS), to map a plan for including child care into the apprenticeship training model. Norma Gray contacted Bob McClain and Dr. Mary Jo Graham to develop the training structure and curriculum. Seventeen apprentices completed the first of four semesters.



## 1991

Cabell County Vocational Technical School received one of the twelve awards given by the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE). Some of the Carl Perkins' funds were allocated by the West Virginia Department of Education to offer five new classes. Dr. Graham and Norma Gray wrote the first Instructor's Manual, and Dr. Graham drafted the curriculum for the first semester.

## 1992

The first Instructor's Seminar was offered at Marshall University for graduate credit taught by Dr. Mary Jo Graham. ACDS was included in Wheelock College's *Making a Career of It*, as one of 40 model training programs. RVCDS received a grant from the Benedum Foundation for statewide coordination, and Cynthia Beal was employed as the first ACDS statewide coordinator. Cynthia Beal drafted the curriculum for the remaining three semesters, then the entire curriculum was revised and expanded by Dr. Mary Jo Graham and Norma Gray. The State Executive Council was also established.



## 1994

The first Instructor's Update was held. The program continued to expand with support and collaboration from WVDOL/BAT, WVDE, vocational technical schools, RVCDS and the Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR). ACDS received four grants of \$25,000 from the Child Care Development Block Grant funds. There were 17 classes in 10 counties.

## 1996

There were 24 classes in 15 sites with over 400 apprentices graduated from the program. Dana Daugherty, director of DOL/BAT, continued to collaborate with the community colleges and 33 credit hours toward an Associate in Applied Science degree in Occupational Development was established. Eight colleges signed agreements.



**1997**

A proclamation was issued by President Bill Clinton recognizing ACDS as a model for the nation's first registered apprenticeship training for early care and education professionals.

**2001**

Sherrie Barrett was hired as ACDS Administrative Assistant. DHHR implemented a project to hire six mentors for each of the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies. The mentors were responsible for supervising family providers enrolled in the ACDS program.

**2003**

Counties cluster to provide more consistent and cost-effective ways of coordinating classes around the state. ACDS is included in the child care licensing and Universal Pre-k requirements. WVU Extension Agents and Family and Consumer Science Instructors completed the ACDS Instructor's Academy.

**2005**

ACDS received \$276,000 from the WV State Set Aside Grant Funds. This supported the development of a partnership between Work Force WV and ACDS and allowed the ACDS Regional Coordinator, Enola Foust, to be maintained and housed in Region 1 Work Force WV. Over 200 apprentices enrolled in the work force system in a span of three years. This collaboration gave apprentices free access to resume writing, computer training, and tutoring.

**2000**

Cynthia Beal retired, and Suzi Brodof was hired as statewide ACDS Coordinator by RVCDS.

**2002**

ACDS received a US DOL federal grant which provided for the hiring of two regional coordinators and the revision of the ACDS "new" curriculum, Starting Point II. An ACDS Instructor's Academy was held in Anchorage, Alaska, and was facilitated by Suzi Brodof and Ann Nutt.

**2004**

Regional coordinators provided trainings for mentors and seminars for center directors to increase awareness and problem solve issues related to staff participating in ACDS.

**2008**

Suzi Brodof became the Executive Director of RVCDS. Sherrie Barrett and Enola Foust were named Coordinators of ACDS. In addition, ACDS was realigned under West Virginia Early Childhood Training Connections and Resources (WVECT-CR). ACDS received the "Best of Princeton 2008" award in the Day Care category from the US Local Business Association.

Reflecting through these last twenty years certainly reveals what a tremendous effect the statewide registered ACDS program has had on early care and education professionals.

Producing more informed, confident, and competent professionals in this field will increase quality and impact the need for working families to have a choice in quality programs for young children. ACDS continues to seek partners and on-going support to enable the program to become more accessible across the state.

If you are interested in the ACDS program and would like to receive more information, please contact Sherrie Barrett at 1-866-523-0433, ext. 404 or Enola Foust at 1-304-972-6400.



# Laying the Foundation for Leadership

Submitted by Nancy Jane Cheshire, Pierpont Community and Technical College



Everyone wants a firm foundation laid when building a home. A house built on a strong base can withstand the storms of time. Many individuals do not realize that high quality early childhood education lays the foundation for children's futures, for their school success, and their leadership skills. It is during the early years of life that children form their sense of self, their character, their values, and their social skills. Through these important early years, the early childhood teacher has the opportunity and power to guide this development.

Teachers and parents want to help children become strong individuals capable of standing up to peer pressure and capable of saying "No" to drugs, poor choices, and harmful activities. We want our children to grow and become honest, trustworthy, self-confident adults. In other words, we want to raise leaders! As early childhood teachers, we lay the foundation of leadership by modeling appropriate behavior and by encouraging the development of autonomy, initiative, problem solving, and communication skills.

One of my favorite authors and early childhood leaders was James L. Hymes, Jr. In his book, "Teaching The Child Under Six" (p. 91), he tells educators that "*the most powerful teaching they will ever do is when they don't say a word.*" Children are learning as they watch and listen to their teacher's words and actions. However, "silent teaching" only takes place when the children have a *strong, positive relationship* with a caring teacher. Then the children want to be "just like that teacher". They want to talk and act like that special person in their lives. This is teaching at its best. What power for positive learning is given to every early childhood teacher! Modeling respect, kindness, honesty, fairness, and politeness should receive top priority each day. These are the characteristics of a strong leader. Character development must be taught and demonstrated as the foundation for future success.

When you have a great new idea and you excitedly approach a friend with whom you wish to share your thoughts, what do you expect from your friend? Do you want them to stop and listen to you? Do you expect to be treated with respect, whether they like your idea or not? Do you respond to children who are talking to you in the same manner in which you would like to be treated? It can be so difficult! We are soooooo busy! It can take a child a long time to express a thought! Every day we have opportunities to model and encourage good listening skills.

When talking to children, it is important to have eye contact with them and to be at their eye level. Not only is this respectful, but it models the importance of eye contact when communicating in our culture. Encourage children to look at the child or adult to whom they are speaking. Again, this is an important characteristic of leadership that is learned in childhood. Leaders are able to communicate well with others.

When we provide large blocks of time for play and child initiated interactions in learning centers, we provide opportunities for children to learn how to communicate effectively with their peers. When we help children solve conflicts by using words, we lay the foundation for an important lifelong skill. When we read aloud, act out stories and make classroom books, we are not only providing language and literacy development, but we are teaching problem-solving and critical thinking, and helping children feel good about themselves. When we use “broadcasting” and put into words what the children are doing, we teach vocabulary and communication as well as helping the children feel they are of value. Teachers across West Virginia are helping build future leaders by providing quality early childhood curriculum.

Our toddlers are very good at saying, “Me do it.” But do our older children still have that self-confidence and eagerness to try new things? If we are to build leaders, we must provide opportunities for the development of both autonomy and initiative. We need children who say, “I don’t know if I can do it, but I will try.” Initiative is an essential building block for leadership. We encourage experimentation and problem-solving through the use of learning centers, play, and discovery learning. Quality curriculum provides an opportunity for every child to experience success every day. This is a key to positive feelings of self-worth and leadership development. “No fail” creative art and easel painting provides daily opportunities for success. Make-believe play and role play allows children to practice leadership, to experience success, and to practice communication skills. When we are tolerant of accidents and mistakes, we encourage the development of initiative. No one will become a risk taker if ridiculed or embarrassed when trying something new.

Whether you are a child care employee, a nanny, a family care provider, a preschool teacher, or any other employee working with young children, hold your head high. Look people in the eye and say, “I am an early childhood teacher.” You are very important. You are silently teaching good morals, values, and caring. You are teaching children how to effectively communicate with peers and adults. You are providing opportunities for children to experience the thrill of trying something new and learning through discovery and exploration. Through quality curriculum and learning experiences, you are providing children a gift for life. You are laying the essential foundation for the development of our future leaders. You are teaching valuable leadership skills.

### Reference

Hymes, J. L. Jr. (1996). *Teaching the child under six*. West Greenwich, RI: Consortium Publishing.

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# Reflections on Leadership

Submitted by Melissa Smith, Department of Health and Human Resources, Division of Early Care and Education

As I was reading the July 2008 Southern Early Childhood Association (SECA) Leadership Letter, the opening article asked the reader, “Ready or Not – Leadership Choices”. I thought to myself, choices? What choices? Is there really a choice in the matter? But as I read further, I realized the article was about more than leadership choices. It was about the *real* choices we make as early childhood professionals. **These choices impact our role as leaders in West Virginia as well as our own communities.**

The article asked six questions regarding *purpose, identity and responsibility* in the field of early care and education. The questions were intense and thought provoking. The article’s challenge was: “How would you respond?” As I read the questions, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Code of Ethical Conduct kept popping into my head, especially in regard to the questions of *responsibility*.

Even though the article was asking the questions of the community at large, one can take those three words--purpose, identity, and responsibility--and apply them to their own leadership goals.

Ask yourself:

- What is your purpose in the position you currently hold?
- What is your identity in the early childhood community?

- What are your responsibilities as they relate to your colleagues, children, and families?

## Purpose

Merriam Webster defines purpose as something set up as an object or end to be attained. In other words, what is your intention? What do you hope to achieve in your position, whether you are a teacher, director, assistant, or specialist? This question challenges us to think about our leadership goals with the position we have been given.

**If you have trouble thinking about your purpose, sometimes it is helpful to begin with a vision and mission.** Most agencies and programs have a vision and mission statement. In Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist (ACDS), each student is required to develop an early childhood

philosophy. This philosophy encompasses the students’ beliefs. This may be something you will want to develop for yourself.

## Identity

**How do you see yourself in your current position?** Are you involved in the early care and education community? Do you attend opportunities to network with other early care and education professionals? In your program and community are you considered a leader? Whether we like it or not, reputation is very important in a leadership role. Think about our past presidents and how their reputation affected their leadership role. Even though we are not President of the United States, our identity in the early care and education field is just as important, for we are working for children. The children of our communities and state need our



voices and our presence.

### Responsibility

As early care and education professionals we have a responsibility. I think most professionals realize this to a certain extent. The NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct is a guide that actually helps us clarify and understand this responsibility more clearly.

**Our first responsibility is to children.** You think this would go without saying, but I have known many early childhood teachers who face tough decisions every day. Teachers must balance their responsibilities to children with their responsibilities to families and colleagues. For example, the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct states that we have a responsibility to base program practices upon current knowledge and research in the field of early childhood education, child development, and related disciplines, as well as on particular knowledge of each child. What happens when the teacher and the center director do not agree on the appropriateness of a classroom activity? The teacher wants to follow what is developmentally appropriate, and the director is concerned with what the parents may think of this “activity”.

**Our second responsibility is to families.** Families come in many different forms. Every family faces its own set of challenges, and programs have a responsibility to understand the individual strengths and needs of each family. With this in mind, we must also remember that the family is the child’s first teacher. Remembering this gives the professional the forethought to

consider where the child is coming from. What experiences has this child incurred? What are the child’s strengths?

**The third responsibility is to colleagues.** When I think about this responsibility I always think of teamwork....working together toward the greater good. In essence, we need to share resources. We need to show respect for one another, much like what we would expect from the children we serve.

**The last responsibility is to community and society.** Are we providing programs that meet the diverse needs of families? Are we collaborating with other early care and education agencies and professionals to assist families in gaining access to those services? Are we assisting in the development of community programs that are needed but not currently available?

I ask myself where I stand on these questions, and I find room for growth through continuing education, collaboration, and participation in the field of early care and education. I hope that by sharing my thoughts on this article you will examine and reflect upon your views and assumptions and use them to help shape your own path.

#### Sources:

NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct  
www.naeyc.org

July 2008, Issue 11, Leadership Letter from SECA entitled, “Ready Or Not – Leadership Choices”

### NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment

“NAEYC recognizes that those who work with young children face many daily decisions that have moral and ethical implications. The NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct offers guidelines for responsible behavior and sets forth a common basis for resolving the principal ethical dilemmas encountered in early childhood care and education.

The Statement of Commitment is not part of the Code but is a personal acknowledgement of an individual’s willingness to embrace the distinctive values and moral obligations of the field of early childhood care and education. The primary focus of the Code is on daily practice with children and their families in programs for children from birth through 8 years of age, such as infant/toddler programs, preschool and pre-kindergarten programs, child care centers, hospital and child life settings, family child care homes, kindergartens, and primary classrooms. When the issues involve young children, then these provisions also apply to specialists who do not work directly with children.”

To view the complete National Association for the Education of Young Children’s (NAEYC) Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment, visit [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org).



## WV STARS Benefits All Early Care and Education Professionals

**W**hen WV STARS, West Virginia's State Training and Registry System, was developed eight years ago, the goal was to implement a professional development system that encompassed all early childhood programs across the state. Since its inception in 2000, WV STARS has grown significantly, not only in the numbers of individuals being served, but also the benefits that can be provided. Many individuals working in the field of early care and education recognize WV STARS and are familiar with some aspects of the program, such as the Career Pathway Credential, but are unaware of the extensive benefits that WV STARS can offer all early care and education practitioners.

All individuals working in the early care and education field, providing direct or indirect services, can apply for a Career Pathway Credential by submitting a completed Career Pathway Application. Once approved on the Career Pathway, participants will receive a credential that indicates the Career Pathway Level based on their education (both formal and informal) as well as experience. This is the state's only credential that encompasses all practitioners in all early childhood programs across the state. Having a Career Pathway Credential presents a professional image to parents and employers by showing that the individual views their position as a career and is interested in continued professional development to grow in that career.

Along with the credential, Career Pathway participants also have access to their WV STARS Professional Development Record, a transcript that lists all WV STARS Registered Training taken while the participant is on the Career Pathway. This record assists early childhood practitioners in keeping up with their training requirements and setting goals for professional development. The record can be accessed online by individuals who have an active Career Pathway Credential on the WV STARS website at [www.wvearlychildhood.org](http://www.wvearlychildhood.org).

**Participation in WV STARS benefits individuals and programs, but it also benefits the early care and education workforce of West Virginia by providing information to policy makers**

Submitted by Natalie Snider, Professional Development and Collaboration Specialist, West Virginia Early Childhood Training Connections and Resources

By promoting participation on the Career Pathway, directors and administrators are supporting the professional development of employees. Along with that support, participation on the Career Pathway can benefit program administrators by assisting in record keeping. Administrators and directors can use the Professional Development Record to determine whether staff members have met training requirements. Because the record groups training attended by the Core Knowledge Areas, the record can also help administrators plan for future professional development by determining what areas have not been covered.

Administrators and directors are encouraged to utilize the West Virginia Core Knowledge and Core Competencies for Early Care and Education Practitioners. There are eight Core Knowledge Content Areas in which individuals working in early care and education should have knowledge. The Core Competencies are a list of skills that practitioners should possess and are organized to correspond with the level of education and experience an individual may have. The competencies can be used to write job descriptions, performance evaluations, and professional development plans for staff.

Another beneficial way that program administrators can participate in WV STARS is to become WV STARS Credential Trainers. As an approved trainer, an administrator can register pre-service and in-service training provided to staff. Many directors/supervisors of other programs are taking advantage of this opportunity to become trainers and are finding that it is much easier for their staff to complete required training hours when the training received within their own center/program is registered. Trainer applicants that meet the requirements to become Certified or Master Trainers can also provide sponsorship to outside presenters that may be providing professional development to staff.

Not only does participation on the Career Pathway benefit individuals and programs, but it also benefits the early care and education workforce in West



Virginia. WV STARS has the capability of compiling information provided on the various applications and forms to give reports to interested parties about the education, experience, employment, and training in the early care and education field. Data that has been provided for policy makers in the past has included reports showing the levels of education and experience of participants working in various programs across the state and information about training being offered in different regions. Please be assured that WV STARS still adheres to a strict confidentiality policy when providing reports. Though general data may be provided, specific information about participants will not be shared.

WV STARS, as a system, will continue to grow in the upcoming years. With that growth will come new ways for WV STARS to assist early care and education practitioners. In the near future, participants will be able to apply for the Career Pathway Credential and register a training event online, as well as obtain valuable information about being an approved trainer by attending WV STARS Credentialed Trainer Orientation. Your input regarding WV STARS and the services provided is always welcomed and can be heard by contacting the WV STARS office at (304) 529-7603 or at [tcr@rvcds.org](mailto:tcr@rvcds.org). Individuals working with the WV STARS program are available to answer any questions and provide assistance in completing forms and applications.

# Hit a Home Run:

## Building Morale and Team Spirit

Submitted by Nikki Cavalier Rabel, Link CCR&R

Research and common sense tells us that a happy employee is a more productive employee. Happy employees are more dedicated, less likely to leave their job, and work harder to improve their program as a whole. So, if happy employees are better employees, then it can be said that a happy staff is also more productive and works harder to improve the overall quality of the services they provide. Who wouldn't want that? As an employee (team player) or an administrator (coach), everybody wins when working together to produce a strong, cohesive, productive winning team!

So, where do we start? Building teams among staff members takes a little thought, a little planning, a little effort, and a buy-in by all players. First, we need to support the team building

effort by focusing on commonalities, while at the same time respecting differences.

A good way to do this is through mission statements. This can be our commonality – working together toward the same goal of making our mission come alive. Divide the mission statement into sections and discuss how the team collectively and individually meets the expectations set forth in your mission statement. Then discuss ways in which this could be improved. There is always room for improvement or making positive changes to make things run more effectively.

Once this has been accomplished, focus on individual mission statements. Ask each person to write a personal mission statement for his/her specific

job. Each team player will need time to think about and revise his/her personal mission statement. When the coach and team player have reviewed it, discussed it, and put it into practice, it becomes a personal goal for quality job performance by that employee that he/she has decided, with the help of the coach, to live by. This doesn't have to be done all at one time. It should be a process that evolves over time as part of the team building initiative. It should also be reviewed and revised yearly to encompass changes in job expectations, goals, or interests.

Now that our team knows who the players are and what "position" each player plays, we need to put team building strategies into effect in practical and meaningful ways that work for each team. This needs to be an ongoing

practice. Efforts should be made at least monthly, more often if possible, to build team spirit.

Make team building a part of your monthly staff meetings. Start each meeting with a fun and simple team building activity.

Research also shows us that laughter is indeed good medicine! Humor affects us intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically. Some of the benefits of humor are increased creativity and problem-solving skills, reduced stress hormones, increased positive and optimistic moods, increased morale and job satisfaction, and a boosted immune system. What a powerful tool laughter is! All of these benefits of laughter and humor can only make your team stronger.

Make it a point to laugh together often, and more importantly, be able to laugh at yourself. A person who can laugh at him/herself not only has a good sense of humor, but gains respect from others, which further enhances the team building effort.

Try collecting appropriate jokes or stories to share with the team. Telling personal, funny stories is also a good way to laugh together and get to know each other a little better in the process. Try sharing stories about things like the first concert you ever attended (mine was the Osmond Brothers in the late 70's!), the first job you ever had, the funniest thing that ever happened to you on the job, etc.

Other team building activities could be games that make the players work together toward a certain goal, such as figuring out a puzzle or doing a specific task.

Now that we've worked on team building, it is only a natural fit to also work on building morale. When morale is low, so is productivity, mood, dedication, and job satisfaction. Improving morale, in turn, will make the team more productive, happier, more reliable, and more satisfied with their jobs.

Focus on ways to build morale and try to eliminate morale busters such as, gossiping, unprofessionalism, and

uncooperativeness.

One simple and inexpensive way to build morale is to send each staff person a birthday card on his/her birthday or take that person out to lunch at a favorite restaurant.

Another way is to write little notes of appreciation for a job well done or for special occasions. Holidays are a great way to keep up with this without letting too much time pass. For example, on Valentine's Day, make a card that can be duplicated that says "I love working with Bruce (individualize each) because..." Then write a few personal statements about why you enjoy work-



ing with that person and what qualities that person brings to the team. You can give it to the employees with a little bit of candy and it will make their day, without much time or expense to you.

If the coach has a team that is too big to accomplish this, divide it up among the team players and have each person write one note of kindness and appreciation to another co-worker, including the coach. They will need time to think about it to make it meaningful and come from the heart.

Finding quotes or inspirational sayings that relate to team members is another way to show them that you appreciate what they do. One of my favorites to share is the Zig Zigler quote, "An optimist is someone who goes after Moby Dick in a rowboat and takes the tarter sauce with him." One quote for the whole team will work, if you can find one that is appropriate, but individual quotes are more meaningful.

Other ways to build morale without investing a lot of time or money is through organizing secret pals, recognizing accomplishments (personal and professional) at staff meetings, organizing an appreciation day or week with activities, or doing little gift exchanges throughout the year.

One of my favorites is the \$2 brown bag gift exchange. Everybody who chooses to participate gets a brown lunch bag and can spend no more than \$2 to buy something that will fit in the brown bag. Each person brings a bag to the staff meeting. Then determine how



the bags will be distributed, such as pass to the person on your right. Then each person passes his/her bag, opens it, and shows everyone what he/she received. Everyone leaves with a little inexpensive surprise. It's not only fun, but it really fosters creativity too!

Acknowledgement and appreciation that is personal and positive is important to team players, and makes them feel like the valued and important team members they are. When you have built a strong team and the players have taken time to get to know and appreciate each other, building morale becomes easy.

Brainstorm ideas of morale boosting activities and work together to make them meaningful, fun, and ongoing. Remember, it is important to make team building and morale boosting a regular part of your everyday routine. With a little extra effort from all of the players, the benefits of a strong team will be amazing!

Lastly, it is important to have a vision, goals, and a plan of action. As a team, using your mission statements, experiences and talents, identify your vision. Where do we want our program to go? As a team, develop a set of goals and objectives to make your vision become a reality and come up with an ongoing plan of action to get there. Don't forget to periodically (during monthly staff meetings, yearly retreats, etc.) check your progress by discussing where the team is, where the team wants to be, and what the team is doing to get there.

A winning team is a quality team and the benefits go beyond the team and expand to the children and families we serve, our other colleagues, and the community at large. Do you choose to be on a winning team? Only you can make it happen!



## Did You Know? ....

### Playing is early learning!

**Watch for these Developmental Milestones ...**

**By 3 Months** -- when lying on her back, attempts to reach for a rattle held above her chest

**By 6 Months** -- reaches for a toy nearby while on her tummy

**Play is more than fun** -- Play (any enjoyable activity that involves people, objects, or movement) is baby's early learning. Everything from blowing bubbles, a cardboard box, peek-a-boo, singing songs, or splashing in the tub helps your baby learn more about their world.

**For more information on developmental milestones,** visit online at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/ActEarly/default.htm>



# This Is Why We Do What We Do

Submitted by Barbara Tucker, West Virginia Early Childhood Transition Steering Committee

This is an update from a parent of a child who had received Birth to Three services. The first sentence was *I wanted to share something very special with you all!* It is a perfect message that shows the results of the hard work of people who believe in quality transitions for all.



Check out my little resident Doctor Braden! You can't see his name badge but it read "Dr Braden- Genetics"!! He knows all about those chromosomes!!!! He was so excited. His teacher says that he used his stethoscope to listen to all the kids' hearts at school. He knew he was cool! If you asked him who he was, he said "Dodor Baden!"

The kindergarten classes walked over to Walmart Plaza and trick or treated at the shops there. This is the first time that I have really been able to see Braden interact with all of the other kids in his kindergarten class.

Braden is full-time inclusive in his kindergarten! The kids were amazing! One little boy from another kindergarten class walked past Braden and said "Hey Bud!" Another little girl said "Hey, there's Braden!" when we walked up beside her and her dad. Another mom told me that her little boy made a special treat bag with a bat in it because her son knew Braden liked bats.

It was at that moment that I started crying. The kids paid attention to Braden and treated him equally. They are so good to him- just like it should be! He had such a good time! He was just another cool kid in the class! See what inclusion can do for our kids!! It makes them just another kid in the class- accepted with differences and all!

Thanks for all of your support and love! Stephanie D. Jackson

# Do you know a child who is not \*moving \*hearing \*seeing \* learning or \*talking like others their age?

By 3 months,  
Does your baby...

- grasp rattle or finger?
- hold up his/her head well?
- make cooing sounds?
- smile when talked to?

By 6 months,  
Does your baby...

- play with own hands/feet?
- roll over?
- turn his/her head towards sound?
- holds head up/looks around without support?

By 9 months,  
Does your baby...

- sit alone or with minimal support?
- pick up small objects with thumb and fingers?
- move toy from hand to hand?

By 12 months,  
Does your baby...

- wave goodbye?
- play with toys in different ways?
- feed self with finger foods?
- begin to pull up and stand?
- begin to take steps?

By 18 months,  
Does your baby...

- cling to caretaker in new situations?
- try to talk and repeat words?
- walk without support?

By 24 months,  
Does your baby...

- point to body parts?
- walk, run, climb without help?
- get along with other children?
- use 2 or 3 word sentences?

If you are concerned about your child's development, get help early.

**Every child deserves a great start.**

WV Birth to Three supports families to help their children grow and learn.

To learn more about the  
WV Birth to Three services  
in your area, please call:

**1-866-321-4728**

Or visit [www.wvdhhr.org/birth23](http://www.wvdhhr.org/birth23)



WV Birth to Three services and supports are provided under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and administered through the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health.

# Leadership in Early Childhood Centers

Submitted by Debbie Somuano, Community Initiatives Coordinator, United Way, Success By 6

In these times where the economic crisis seems to affect a vast majority of people and force them to face challenges in many areas, it seems that more and more, professionals need to be prepared to face a changing and competitive work market. Professionals can't attempt to seek a good position with basic skills. They need skills that will make them better leaders. In the early childhood provider's world, it is the same way. Directors of early childhood centers need to become good leaders, especially if they want to maintain trained and qualified staff that are prepared to offer the best quality care to their community.

Anyone that has the will and interest can become an effective leader through an endless process of education, training, self-study, and experience.

To learn more about leadership, let's start by defining it. Leadership is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs an organization in a way that makes it work in unison with its mission.

The basis of good leadership is honorable character and selfless service to an organization. Employees either follow or reject their leader according to the leader's character and ethics.

According to the Hay Group, a management consultant firm, there are two basic keys to effective leadership:

1. Trust and confidence in the leader are the most reliable predictors of employee satisfaction
2. Leaders must display effective communication in these areas:
  - Helping employees understand the organization's mission.
  - Informing employees how they contribute to achieve this mission.
  - Sharing information on how the organization and employees are doing overall.

## Leadership Framework

The following leadership framework is an easy tool to use to become a good leader or to compare against your current skills and learn if you are already one.

### BE – KNOW - DO

- Be a professional by taking personal responsibility and performing selfless service.
- Demonstrate good character and traits: honesty, competence, commitment, integrity, courage, and creativity.
- Know yourself, your weaknesses, strengths, skills, and knowledge.
- Inspire and share a vision that can be understood by the staff.
- Know your job, your organization, and the mission and be proficient to



train and teach others.

- Give your staff the tools and methods to solve challenges.
- Give direction, communicate, coordinate, supervise, evaluate, motivate, coach, counsel, and train.

True leadership is found in organizations where employees work as a team and reach their highest potential, thus strengthening the relationship and translating into customer satisfaction.

Many people believe that leaders are born with leadership skills; however, genes can determine only a small percentage of a person's ability to accomplish something. Training, education, and self-study are more likely to reflect a person's leadership effectiveness.

A good example of nature vs. nurture is what Piaget has shown us with his theory to see children as species equipped with a characteristic mind, rather than as apprentice adults (little adults). He discovered children went through a series of developmental stages that were always in the same order, but not always at the same rate. These stages are sensorimotor, preoperational, con-

crete operations, and in adolescence, deductive reasoning.

Neuroscientists Pasco Rakic, Fernando Nottebohm, and Elizabeth Gould performed several case studies to study brain development in animals and humans. They concluded it is almost certain that all primates, including humans, grow neurons in response to new experiences, and lose neurons in response to neglect, confirming that environment, education, and experience can help anyone become an effective leader.

If you or a co-worker is interested in leadership training, contact your local university or technical college and request information on classes, schedules and financial aid.

A great resource is the ACDS program. Contact Sherrie Barrett at 304-523-0433 or visit [www.wvacds.org](http://www.wvacds.org)

There are also several training opportunities in the state either by attending a conference or signing up for a course online. Celebrating Connections offers a variety of tracks including professionalism and program management. Visit [wvearlychildhood.org](http://wvearlychildhood.org) for more information.

Many people believe that leaders are born with leadership skills; however, genes can determine only a small percentage of a person's ability to accomplish something. Training, education, and self-study are more likely to reflect a person's leadership effectiveness.

Yahoo!

# Nancy Cheshire Receives Award

Submitted by Helen Post-Brown, West Virginia Association for Young Children

The West Virginia Association for Young Children (WVAYC) is very proud of one of its members: Nancy Jane Cheshire. Nancy was awarded the 2009 Southern



Early Childhood Association (SECA) Outstanding Member Award at the SECA Conference January 30, 2009, at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Nancy currently serves as a Professor of Early Childhood at Pierpont Community and Technical College at Fairmont State University and as a Governing Board Member of the West Virginia Association for Young Children.

Nancy has a long history of service to both the West Virginia Association for Young Children and the Southern Early Childhood Association, having served in various capacities for both organizations during the past 14 years.

She represented her state SECA Board of Directors for seven years and spent one term as SECA's Vice President. During her 14 years as a WVAYC Governing Board Member, she has proven to be an outstanding mentor for new Governing Board members as well as a great number of WVAYC's general members, especially college students.

For those of us that have known Nancy for a number of years, we know her as a teacher, mentor, good friend, and great story teller. There is not a stack of children's books she can pass without stopping to read; there is not a friend she can pass by without stopping to say hello. If you have not been privileged to hear one of Nancy's stories, you have missed out on a great opportunity.

WVAYC is honored to have the 2009 SECA Outstanding Member as a member of its WVAYC Board of Directors.

Congratulations! Kudos!



# Raising Readers Around the State

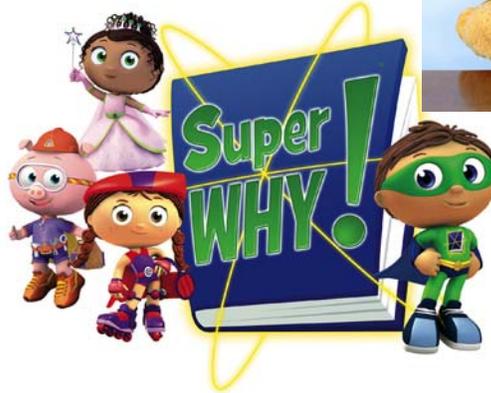
West Virginia Public Broadcasting is proud to extend its Ready To Learn service with a new initiative called PBS KIDS Raising Readers. The PBS KIDS Raising Readers initiative features six children's television programs that incorporate the latest research about how children learn from media and the best ways to use media to build reading skills.

**Sesame Street** and **Between the Lions** are joined by four new programs: **Super Why!**, **WordWorld**, **Martha Speaks**, and **The Electric Company**. Other resources include an aggregated Web site called **PBS KIDS Island**, books, reading camps, outreach and community activities. Check your local listings for broadcast times of these programs on West Virginia PBS.

To access **PBS KIDS Island** go to [www.ready-tolearnreading.org](http://www.ready-tolearnreading.org).

To find out more about Ready To Learn and the PBS KIDS Raising Readers initiative, contact Debbie Oleksa at 1-888-596-9729 or [doleksa@wvpubcast.org](mailto:doleksa@wvpubcast.org).

West Virginia Public Broadcasting's Ready To Learn service is made possible in part through generous support from the West Virginia Office of Education and the Arts and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.



**WEST VIRGINIA  
PUBLIC BROADCASTING**



The contents of this adventure packet were developed under a grant, #PRU295A050003, from the Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.



Most important school supply? --  
**A Healthy Check Up**

**Does your child's Comprehensive Well-Child Check-Up include?**

- An Unclothed Physical**
- Vision Screen**
- Hearing Screen**
- Dental Screen**
- A Developmental Check right for his age and stage**

**Helping your child be school-ready!**

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*Because we  
can all be  
leaders  
in the early  
care and  
education  
community!*

Find these free resources  
on leadership in the Early  
Childhood Resource  
Lending Library

**Expanding Leadership  
Impact: A Practical  
Guide to Managing  
People and Processes**  
by Kevin R. Kehoe

**Positive Leadership:  
How to Build a  
Winning Team**  
by Mike Pegg

...and many more!

The Early Childhood Resource Lending Library contains numerous resources on early childhood development topics. The materials are available for loan to early childhood personnel and parents.

**Choose from books, brochures, videotapes, training manuals, workbooks, curriculum guides, assessment tools, self-study modules, adapted toys and software.**

**Visit the library at 350 Capitol Street, Room 427,  
Charleston, WV or call 1-800-642-9704**

**Early Childhood Resource Lending Library**  
[www.wvdhhr.org/mcfh/library/](http://www.wvdhhr.org/mcfh/library/)

A collaborative project of the WV Department of Health and Human Resources/Bureau for Children and Families/Division of Early Care and Education; Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health/WV Birth to Three; and the West Virginia Department of Education/Office of Special Education

# WVCCU Hosts Second Leadership Academy

Submitted by Helen Post-Brown, West Virginia Child Care Centers United

Dear Child Care Center Directors:

You are invited to the second annual West Virginia Childcare Centers United (WVCCU) Leadership Academy. Last year, 30 child care directors met for four days of intense and life changing instruction. The academy was so successful more directors wanted to participate in the program. The 2008 WVCCU Leadership graduates will join us Thursday night for a special dinner and take part in the training on Friday, August 14 .

## Mark Your Calendar!

**WVCCU Leadership  
Academy 2008 Graduates  
Special reunion dinner  
and training**

**Dinner, August 13 &  
Training, August 14**

**Register online  
[www.wvccu.info](http://www.wvccu.info)**

Holly Elissa Bruno, author, teacher, and keynote speaker in early childhood education leadership, will jump start the first two days with her unique ability to take early childhood leadership to a whole different level. The director as a manager, organizer, and communicator; staff selection and supervision; discipline; and legal matters will be some of the subjects covered. The Myers Briggs test will be used to help you discover your leadership style and your personal strengths and needs.

The academy starts at 10:00 am on Tuesday, August 11 and ends on Friday, August 14. The registration form is available online at [www.wvccu.info](http://www.wvccu.info). The 2009 Leadership Academy will take place at Blessed John XXIII Pastoral Center in Charleston, WV. Participants are expected to stay at the Pastoral Center during the entire academy. Only 30 spaces are available. We will operate on a first come, first serve basis. STARS credit will be available. For more information, email [sunbeamccc@aol.com](mailto:sunbeamccc@aol.com).

Do not miss this wonderful opportunity to recharge and to network with your fellow West Virginia directors.

On behalf of the WVCCU Leadership Academy Coordinators,

**Suzi Brodof**

Executive Director, River Valley Child Development Services

**Susan Miller**

Director, Marshall University Child Development Academy

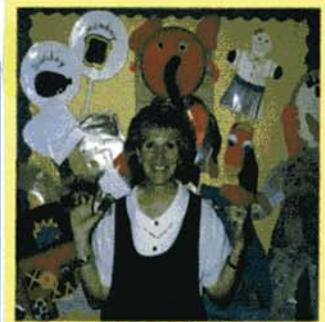
**Helen Post-Brown**

Director, Sunbeam Child Care Center LLC

# WEST VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN



Dr. Jean holds a Ph.D. from Georgia State University and is a nationally known early childhood presenter, author, recording artist, and teacher.



Dr. Jean & Friends

**PRESENTING:**  
**DR. JEAN FELDMAN, "RECIPES FOR FUN"**  
**THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 2009**  
**9:00AM - 3:30PM**  
**VILLAGE SQUARE, SOUTH CLARKSBURG**

You'll be ready to start your new school year with a song, a bag full of activities, and JOY in your heart! You'll leave with dozens of new rhymes, stories, games, and center ideas that will engage students and make learning more FUN!

You will need to bring your scissors, markers, crayons, hole punch, glue, and tape. You will also need to print a list of materials for the projects you want to make at the afternoon session of "Make & Take". Go to [www.wvayc.com](http://www.wvayc.com) You will find a list of projects and materials needed to make over 14 projects. Team together with fellow teachers and share the projects list.

**Registration:**  
**8:00—9:00am**  
 \*\* STARS Registered



Reservations must be postmarked by Friday, July 24, 2009  
 No Refunds after 8/1/09

Directions on web site:  
[www.wvayc.com](http://www.wvayc.com)

## WEST VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN REGISTRATION FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_



- Member \$65.00
  - Non-Member \$75.00
  - Student \$55.00
- Total Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

\* Lunch is included in registration

**CHECK'S MADE PAYABLE TO WWAYC** CHECK # \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail Check & Registration:** \*Before mailing, Make a copy  
 Shelia Edwards for your records!  
 851 Eli Locust Road  
 Washington, WV 26181

Location of Workshop  
 Village Square  
 Rt. 19 South Clarksburg, WV 26301  
 Information: contact: Brenda Stephens  
 304-422-0399

# Guidelines for Developmentally Appropriate Practice

*Sharing Corner:*  
I hear many early care and education professionals talk about developmentally appropriate practice. What is it and what does it look like?



NAEYC Early Years are Learning Years

The context in which early childhood programs operate today is characterized by ongoing discussion between parents, teachers, and the research community about how best to teach young children and what sort of practice is most likely to contribute to their development and learning. Since the original National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) developmentally appropriate practice guidelines were published in 1987, a considerable number of studies have examined the topic.

Recent data shows that many teachers who say they believe in developmentally appropriate practice do not have developmentally appropriate classrooms. A recent study of kindergarten teachers found that more than half demonstrated conflicts between their philosophy of early childhood education and their classroom practices. Data also indicates that teachers who receive inservice training on developmentally appropriate practices via workshops, site visits, and journal reflections reported a greater tendency to use these practices.

There is no singular formula for developmentally appropriate practice. Rather, teachers use these strategies to make day-to-day decisions based on the individual children, their families, and the social and cultural context.

Here are five basic guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice:

**Create a caring community of learners.** Developmentally appropri-

ate practice supports the development of relationships between adults and children, among children, among teachers, and between families and teachers.

**Teach to enhance development and learning.** Early childhood teachers strive to achieve a balance between guiding children's learning and following their lead.

**Construct appropriate curriculum.** The content of early childhood curriculum includes the subject matter, social or cultural values, parents' input, and the age and experience of the children.

**Assess children's learning and development.** Assessment of individual children's development and learning is essential for planning and implementing appropriate curriculum.

**Establish mutually beneficial relationships with family.** Developmentally appropriate practices evolve from a deep knowledge of individual children and the context within which they develop and learn. The younger the child, the more necessary it is for caregivers and teachers to acquire this knowledge through relationships with children's families.

Developmentally appropriate practices will continue to receive close scrutiny—which is a plus—because the more we learn about teaching and learning in early childhood environments, the better our children will grow and prosper.

# Parent Blocks

## NEWSLETTER



"Providing resources to parents throughout West Virginia"  
Volume 6, Issue 2, Spring 2009

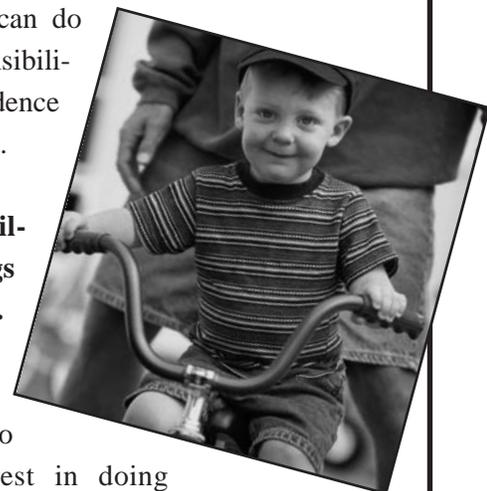
## Teaching Responsibility and Independence

Children start the drive toward independence at an early age. Some parents, accustomed to meeting all their children's needs, are reluctant to give in to their children's demands for independence. However, this is the time for parents to find the balance between letting their children begin to do things for themselves and providing their children with the support and guidance they need.

things parents can do to foster responsibility and independence in their children.

### Let your children do things for themselves.

Even very young children begin to



show an interest in doing things for themselves. Parents can encourage independence by letting their children do things for themselves as soon as they express the desire to do so. Parents should focus on effort and avoid being critical of the end product. Parents should praise children for doing things on their own. As children grow and mature, they will naturally want to do more and more for themselves.

**Let your children help with challenging tasks.** Parents should encourage their children

*continued on the following page*

WV Parent Blocks Newsletter is a project of West Virginia Early Childhood Training Connections and Resources, a collaborative project of West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources/Bureau for Children and Families/Division of Early Care and Education; WV Head Start State Collaboration Office; Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health/West Virginia Birth to Three; and West Virginia Department of Education/Office of Special Education and is supported and administered by River Valley Child Development Services.

Permission to photocopy

With this increasing independence comes the ability for children to understand the concept of responsibility. This is an excellent time for parents to begin teaching responsibility for their children.

Here are some

Visit our website at [www.wvearlychildhood.org](http://www.wvearlychildhood.org)

to try to do new things and to face new challenges. This will certainly boost children's sense of competence. Parents should be careful to choose tasks that their children are able to accomplish.

**Encourage your children to make decisions.** Parents should start encouraging decision-making while their children are young. At first, choices should be kept simple, like allowing children to choose what to wear out of two outfits. As children get older, parents should encourage them to make more and more complex decisions. Children learn to make good choices by being given choices.

**Learn to model responsibility and independence.** Children learn by watching their parents. One of the best ways for parents to teach their children to behave responsibly and independently is by displaying those behaviors themselves. Parents should let their children see them making decisions without wavering. Parents should let their children see them taking care of responsibilities in an appropriate manner.

**Help and encourage your children to solve their own problems.** Problem-solving is a skill that must be learned. Starting when children are young, parents should teach their children problem-solving strategies. Parents should then encourage their children to come up with their own solutions to their problems. The ability to problem-solve is a skill



that will be useful throughout children's lives. It will also aid in the development of confidence and independence.

**Encourage your children to take risks.** Taking risks involves facing potential failure. Many parents try to shield their children from the disappointment of failure. Such parents may be doing their children a disservice. Children need to take risks to grow. Children must experience failure in order to learn how to cope with it.

**Be there to provide support, when needed.** Even the most independent-minded children need to lean on their parents from time to time. Parents should make an effort to be available to their children and to provide support when needed. Children who know their parents will be there when they need them will have the confidence needed to explore the world.

**Provide adequate discipline.** Children need structure in their

lives to feel secure. Appropriate discipline provides this structure. Children need to know what to expect from their parents and what their parents expect from them. Consistent discipline helps children learn about what's expected of them. Children who know what to expect feel more in control of their lives and are thus more likely to behave in responsible and independent ways.

**Praise your children.** Parents should provide their children with lots of praise when they display responsible and independent behavior. Parents who praise such behavior are letting their children know that they notice and appreciate their efforts.

**Give your children responsibilities.** Most children want to help their parents and to feel needed. One of the best ways for children to learn how to behave responsibly is to be given responsibilities. Parents can give their children responsibilities in the form of chores. Parents should make sure that the chores assigned to their children match their capabilities. Parents should also take the time to show their children how to do their assigned tasks the correct way. Parents should keep in mind, though, that how well their children perform a task is not as important as what their children are learning about responsibility.

*Written by Kristin Zolten, M.A. & Nicholas Long, Ph.D., Department of Pediatrics, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.*

# Four Tips to Building Self-Esteem in Children

Parents want their child to have good self-esteem. However, self-esteem doesn't come naturally to children. It is something that must be fostered, developed, nurtured, and grown.

Following these four tips can help.

## 1. Show them you value them

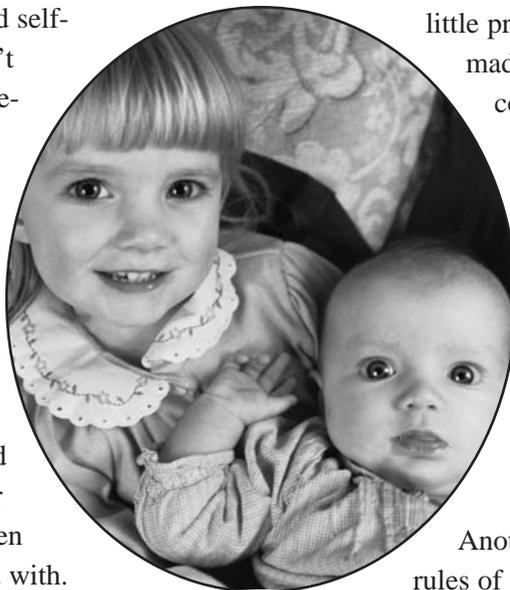
Let your children know you love them. This is done through praise and through direct expressions of love, hugs, and kisses. Children need to be told directly by their parents or caregiver that they are loved. Children need to be held, cuddled, and played with. Quality and quantity of time demonstrate value. Few things speak more to being valued, than just being there.

## 2. Teach them and let them learn

Competency is the next ingredient to healthy self-esteem. As the child grows and begins exploring the house (often the kitchen cupboards), the child gains the opportunity to increase competency with access and control of larger objects over greater spaces. Again the response of the parent is crucial. Some parents structure the child's environment for maximum exploration while other parents localize their child's area of living. Either way, making way for the child to play and explore safely, whatever the limits, is often referred to as "baby proofing". The greater the control and mastery of skills a child develops the greater the sense of competency.

## 3. Participate in doing good deeds

The third thing parents can do to facilitate healthy self-esteem in their children is to direct and participate with their children in the doing of good deeds. Doing good deeds teaches children to be aware of the life of others beyond themselves. This enables the development of empathy and altruistic behavior. What's important is that children are encouraged or even positioned to be helpful to the extent of their ability. A toddler may carry a plastic cup to the table, an older child a plate and a spoon, while the oldest child can clear the table. Special



little projects can be undertaken, visits can be made, and pennies can be put in the charity coin boxes at the check-out counter.

## 4. Make the rules of life clear

The last thing parents can provide to facilitate self-esteem in their children is structure. Structure is a word that actually implies two separate concepts: routines and limits. Routines provide structure over time and limits provide structure over behavior.

Another way to think of structure is like the rules of a game. How well could you play

Monopoly, Hop Scotch, Tag, or Hide and Go Seek, if there weren't rules? Rules include who goes next, under which circumstances, and when. The rules also include what happens when someone goes outside the normal bounds of play--miss a turn, pay a fine, etc.

Knowing the rules of the game of life is sometimes referred to as internalizing structure. This too is also a form of competency--when the child knows the how's, what's, when's, and where's of life.

Unfortunately this information doesn't come automatically. Children may pick some of the rules up incidentally as they go along, but this leaves much to chance. Parents can help their children internalize structure by commenting on daily routines, specifying appropriate behavior, providing feedback, and by providing consequences for undesirable behavior.

These four ingredients--value, competency, good deeds, and structure--form the basic building blocks for the development of self-esteem. And why develop self-esteem in children? Children with healthy self-esteem feel good about themselves, relate well to others, behave more appropriately, and are more aware of the world around them.

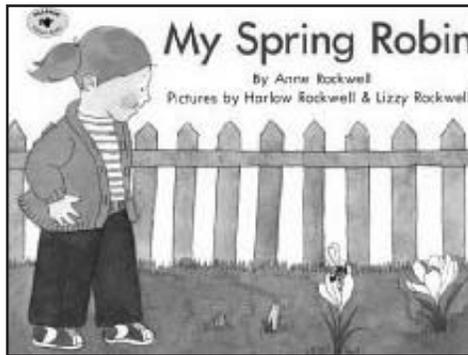
*Provided by Gary Direnfeld, a child-behavior expert, social worker and author of "Raising Kids Without Raising Cane"*

**You and your child are sure to love these children's books about spring. Visit your local library or bookstore and you're sure to find many more.**

### **My Spring Robin**

*By Anne Rockwell*

An easy to read book about a young girl who is searching for her spring robin. She finds lots of other interesting nature during the beginning of spring as she searches for her robin.



### **Bear Wants More**

*By Karma Wilson*

A delightful book about a bear waking up from a long winter's nap to find his tummy is hungry. His friends help him find all kinds of delicious treats.



### **Jack's Garden**

*By Henry Cole*

A beautifully illustrated book that captures all of the steps Jack takes to successfully grow his garden. The book includes instructions for starting a garden.



**Do you have a child with special needs? Here is a parent resource that provides stipends to families to attend training opportunities for families of children with special needs. The trainings can be part of larger conferences or single events. The funds may be used to cover the registration fee and applied to travel expenses. Please call 60 days prior to the training event.**

**To find trainings on various topics, please visit [www.wvearly-childhood.org](http://www.wvearly-childhood.org) and click on the training calendar. This is a comprehensive list of WV STARS registered trainings in the state. You can search by county or by topic.**

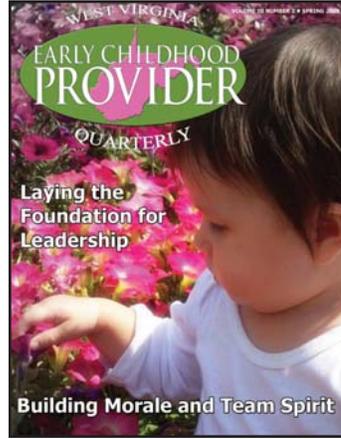
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