

WEST VIRGINIA
EARLY CHILDHOOD
PROVIDER

QUARTERLY

**Songs
for
Life
Lessons**

Stepping Stones:
Social-Emotional Development

Executive Editors

Melanie Clark
Judy Curry
Traci Dalton
Ginger Huffman
Pam Roush

Editor-in-chief

Brooke Hunter

Associate Editor/Layout & Design

Michelle Tveten Rollyson

Contributors

Carrie Adams, Sherrie Barrett, Debra Bowyer, Suzi Brodof,
Nancy Cheshire, Kay DeWitt, Janet Dozier, Stephanie Geneseo,
Gretchen Grove-DeJarnett, Sarah Hicks, Tom Lottman,
Helen Post-Brown, Barbara Tucker, WV Birth to Three, WV CHIP

Group Publisher

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Please refer to the following list to contact group publishers:

WV Department of Health & Human Resources/Bureau for Children and Families/Division of Early Care and Education

350 Capitol Street, Charleston, WV 25301
(304)558-1885
www.wvchildcare.org

**WV Office of Maternal, Child & Family Health/
WV Birth to Three System**

350 Capitol Street, Charleston, WV 25301
(304)558-5388 • (800)642-8522
www.wvdhhr.org/birth23

WV Head Start State Collaboration Office

350 Capitol Street, Charleston, WV 25301
(304)558-4638

WV Department of Education/Office of Special Education

1900 Kanawha Blvd., East, Charleston, WV 25305
(304)558-2696 • (800)642-8541
http://wvde.state.wv.us/ose/

Editorial Offices

WV Early Childhood Training Connections and Resources
611 Seventh Avenue, Ste. 322
Huntington, WV 25701
(304)529-7603 • (888)WVECTCR
Fax: (304)529-2535
www.wvearlychildhood.org
Email: TCR@rvcds.org

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Lighting the Way for Early Childhood Education

Submitted by Stephanie Geneseo, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood West Virginia

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® WEST VIRGINIA is pleased to announce the investment of a \$100,000 grant from the American Electric Power Foundation of West Virginia. The funding will provide scholarship assistance to early childhood professionals seeking college degrees in early childhood education.

The goal of T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® WV is to develop educational investments in West Virginia early childhood teachers. The T.E.A.C.H. scholarships light the way for affordability and sustainability of child care staff to complete their goals for higher education and teacher certification.

The AEP Foundation shares this vision for supporting early childhood education professionals and has invested \$100,000 over the next two years to support providing scholarships through T.E.A.C.H.

A check presentation took place on January 4 at River Valley Child Development Services. Attendees helping to celebrate the award included: AEP representatives, Senator Robert Plymale, Delegate Doug Reynolds, T.E.A.C.H. recipients and their stu-

dents, sponsoring center directors, college representatives, DHHR representatives and RVCDS employees. Ronda Dowdy, scholarship recipient from Norma Gray Early Learning, and Letitia Riddell, scholarship recipient from Playmates, were in attendance with their students to participate in the check presentation and share what the investments mean to their success as West Virginia Pre-K teachers. The children were greeted by the AEP mascot “Louie the Lightning Bug” and shared a healthy snack before returning to their child care centers.

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® WEST VIRGINIA scholarship project was developed to upgrade the level of education of teachers working with young children, while making the educational process affordable, increasing wages

and reducing turnover. The project began in North Carolina in 1990 by the Child Care Services Association and has since spread across 22 states, including West Virginia.

River Valley Child Development Services (RVCDS) operates T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® WEST VIRGINIA under WVECTCR and is funded by the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources and the Kresge Foundation. The T.E.A.C.H. program is honored to welcome the AEP Foundation as a partner in the growth and development of West Virginia’s early childhood educators.

For more information, contact Stephanie Geneseo, T.E.A.C.H. Specialist at (304)529-7603 ext. 118 or e-mail sgeneseo@rvcds.org.





Stepping Stones to Social-Emotional Development

Submitted by Nancy Jane Cheshire, SECA President-Elect

Individuals working in early childhood programs have opportunities each day to build “stepping stones” or “stumbling blocks” for young children. News reports often tell stories of violence, bullying and general disrespect for others in society. One of the most important responsibilities of adults is to help children develop positive social and emotional attitudes, actions and beliefs. This helps to build a peaceful society. The words and actions of teachers can help young children view themselves as worthy, competent individuals capable of helping, and showing respect for others.

Each day when the teacher greets a child with a smile and calls the child by name, the child feels important and welcome. The same holds true for parents who are greeted with a smile, called by name and included in the care and education of their children. These actions build positive caring relationships that meet the emotional needs of both children and families. These actions are “stepping stones” that help the children and families feel valued. When children see the adults in their lives communicating and working together, they learn what it means to be “an adult.” When children observe the adults in their life having trusting relationships with plenty of give-and-take, the template is laid down in childhood that shapes their adult approach to living with others (Baker and Manfredi/Petitt, 2004). A smile, kind word, and a few minutes of eye-to-eye communication are powerful “stepping stones.”

David L. Rice teaches the power of a small, thoughtful action in his children’s book, Because Brian Hugged His Mother. When Brian hugs and kisses his mother one morning, the act starts a chain reaction of kindness and consideration that spreads throughout the town and eventually comes back to him. As the author states, “Be kind in all you say and do, ‘cause acts of kindness follow you; With just one kindness a chain will start to grow and glow from heart to heart!”

Thoughtful, intentional planning of the classroom environment is another action that greatly impacts the social and emotional development of children. A classroom that provides spaces where children can work and play with others, as well as quiet spots and places they can play alone, help children feel respected and empowered. When supplies are on open shelves and easy for children to see and reach, when art work is hung at children’s eye level and all children can see their own art work displayed, the children feel competent and proud. Allowing children to make many appropriate choices throughout the day provides opportunities for the children to feel successful. All children need to experience success everyday. Preparing a positive classroom environment for children builds “stepping stones” to positive social

***“Isn’t it strange, that
princes and kings,
And clowns that caper
in sawdust rings,
And common folks like
me and you,
Are builders of
eternity.
To each is given a book
of rules,
A shapeless mass and a
bag of tools,
And, each must make,
err life is flown,
A stumbling block or a
stepping stone.”
-Unknown Author***

and emotional development (Dodge, Colker and Heroman, 2002).

Children need and deserve to experience success everyday. Children are tiny people living in a world of giants. Young children often fall down, spill things, or run when adults want them to walk. Young children are excited, curious and have a hard time sitting still, they want to explore the world and learn. At these times, early childhood teachers can build “stepping stones” if they understand these characteristics are all part of being a child and they respond appropriately, or they can build “stumbling blocks” by having inappropriate expectations.

A teacher’s spoken words are powerful. Everyone who works with infants, toddlers, preschoolers or school-age children is a “teacher.” The classification or job title is not important to children. Their teacher is the person who cares for them and helps them learn and grow. You can count on the fact that children are watching and listening to the important adults in their lives. When a child feels valued and accepted by their teacher, the child wants to be like that person. Truly, the words and actions of *every person* working with young children are shaping the children’s future and self-image. Remember the rhyme that says, “Sticks and stones can break my bones but words can never hurt me.” You may prefer the version that says, “Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words can break my heart.” A teacher’s words can build “stepping stones” or “stumbling blocks.” As important adults in the lives of children, early care professionals are being observed and copied by their stu-

dents, children and grandchildren. “Common folks like you and me are builders for eternity.”

Positive, appropriate comments on children’s actions can be affirming and uplifting. Examples of positive comments may be, “I saw you picking up the blocks. Thank you for being a helper.” or “You really worked hard on your collage picture. I see red, blue, yellow and green shapes. Your work is bright and colorful!” These statements reflect what the teacher saw, which in turn lets the child know his work and effort was noticed. Appropriate words encourage children’s feelings of self-worth and build “stepping stones” leading to positive social and emotional growth.

When the classroom becomes a community of learners, positive growth takes place. A spirit of community encourages children to work together, help each other and learn to be a friend. The teacher has opportunities to teach problem-solving and negotiating skills. Children learn to be a part of the community. This can not happen without intentionality on the part of the

teacher. The development of positive social and emotional development must be seen as a top priority by all teachers. The teacher has the power to establish a classroom in which each child is seen as a valuable contributing member of the community. In a positive classroom, the teacher and children enjoy warm, supportive relationships with one another and enthusiasm, including laughter and smiling, are observed. The children are comfortable, interact with each other, and work together during free choice time. The teacher enjoys social conversation with the children, is genuinely interested in what the children say, and demonstrates this with eye contact, and follow-up questions. The classroom is a warm, friendly community where the children are welcomed, encouraged and appreciated (Pianta, La Paro and Hamre, 2008).

Within the classroom community, children can be taught and encouraged to use words to communicate feelings and emotions. Cindy O’Brien’s book, *Agitated!*, teaches this great vocabulary word and helps children remember when a wise choice is made, “you feel good and do what you should.” Amy



Krouse Rosenthal uses the adventure of making chocolate chip cookies to teach the meaning of words such as compassionate, trustworthy, fair, and polite in her beautiful book, Cookies: Bite-Size Life Lessons. As meaningful adults in the lives of children, it is a responsibility to intentionally teach kindness, good manners and the social skills needed to live in harmony with others.

For many years, Fred Rogers taught children how to be a good neighbor. In his book, You Are Special: Words of Wisdom from America's Most Beloved Neighbor, Mr. Rogers reminds everyone how important significant adults are in the lives of children. He said that "when children grow-up they might not remember clearly those of us who were the educators during their early years, yet we will always be a part of who they are. Just like those who meant so much to us when we were children will always be part of who we are." Words and actions do not go unnoticed. Early care providers are serving as role models for children, building "stepping stones" that help children reach their potential or "stumbling blocks" that discourage and hinder a child's future.

Children learn to trust when they have teachers who are responsive and

respectful. When the needs of infants are met with consistency, kindness, and respect, children learn to trust others. Toddlers, who have developed a sense of trust as infants, begin to venture away from the responsive, trustworthy adults as they gain autonomy and explore their environment. Preschoolers develop initiative and learn to be independent and responsible in an environment where they feel competent and valued. Children with positive self-images are willing to explore, try new ways to solve problems and become leaders. Children who learn to have respect for others will make this world a kinder, better place.

To reach these goals children need:

- Teachers who allow every child to experience success everyday.
- Teachers who help children feel wanted, valued and accepted in the classroom.
- Teachers who model respect, kindness and caring for others.

These teachers are truly building "stepping stones" that allow children to reach their potential. These teachers are builders for eternity.

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Social-Emotional Development in Early Childhood

Submitted by Kay DeWitt, Preston County Starting Points

The preschool years are a special and important time in the life of young children. During this period, children begin to trust people other than their family, gain independence and self-control, and act in socially acceptable ways. They learn language, observe and experiment with their surroundings, and handle and maneuver objects.

A child's development can be divided into four areas: social and emotional, physical, cognitive, and language.

These four developmental areas are closely related and overlap. One development influences the others. For example: A child has a book and realizes the print conveys a message (language). Observe how the child handles the book and if he works independently or interacts with the adult reading or another child (social/emotional). Give the child writing tools to draw a picture he observed in the book (physical). Does the child repeat or act out a part in the story (cognitive)?

Social and emotional development is about socialization, the process in which children learn the values and behaviors accepted by society (*The Creative Curriculum*, Fourth Edition). This also leads to becoming a competent and confident child.

Social and emotional readiness is essential to a child's well-being. This readiness will help a child to be successful in school and as adult. Many seem to



"Social and emotional development is about socialization, the process in which children learn the values and behaviors accepted by society."

focus on school readiness through academic content and ignore social and emotional readiness. Social and emotional readiness is critical to success in public school. When the child is ready to transition from playgroups, to pre-k, then on to kindergarten, it is important to ask, "Is this child socially and emotionally ready to transition?"

Social and emotional readiness can be taught and nurtured when children are very young. Playgroups, preschools, and other classrooms are prime settings to gain social and emotional competence.

At birth, babies need to bond with the mother, father, grandparent or caregiver, as this is the first emotional starting point of all human relationships. The child can then expand to other people after she has bonded with her caregiver. This bonding will then lead to basic trust. A child will trust the adult that meets his basic needs, especially when done in a consistent and timely manner.

As babies move into the toddler stage and become mobile, they begin to be afraid of strangers and afraid to be in a room alone. The caregiver needs to hold, cuddle, and reassure them they are safe.

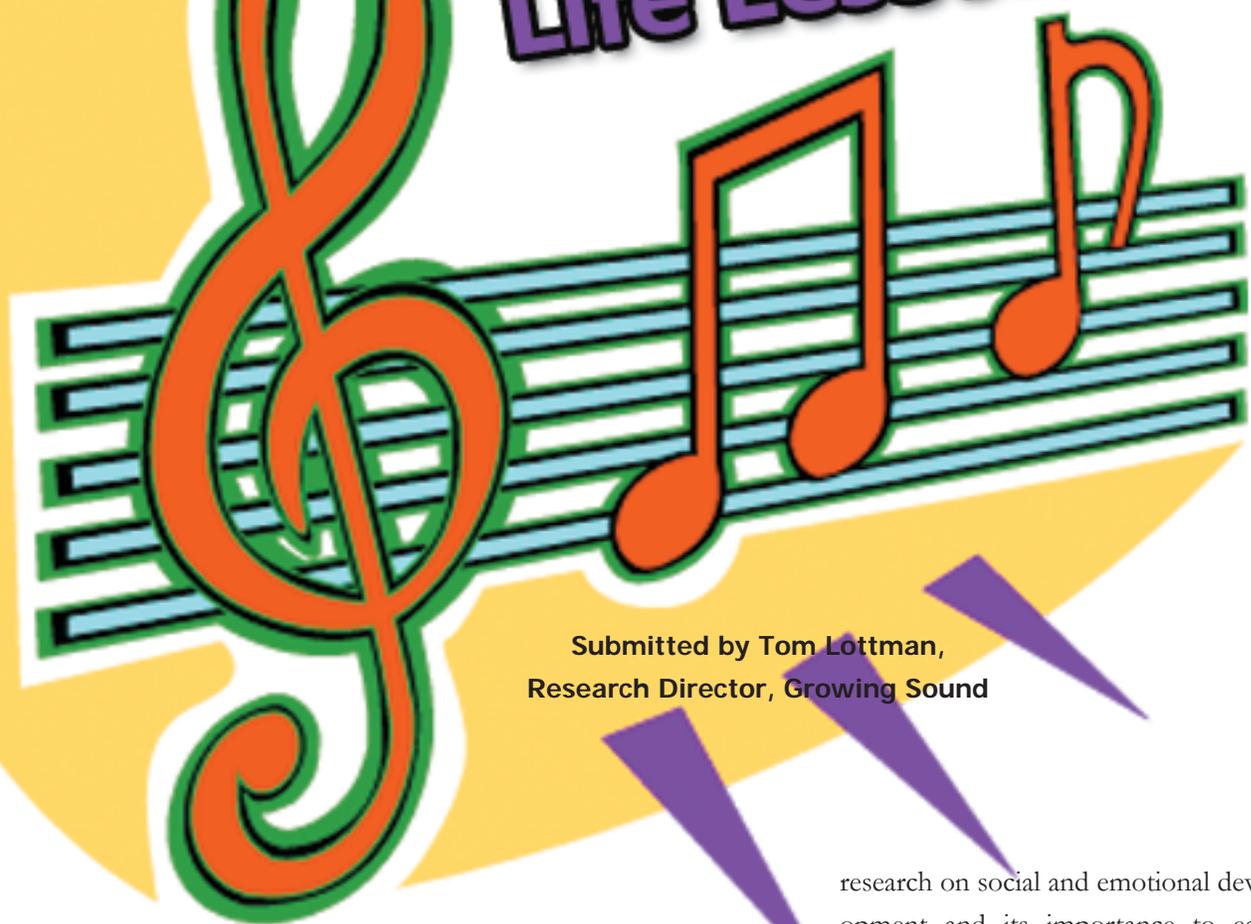
Two year olds begin to show independence. Everything revolves around them. Language is being used and sharing is difficult. Giving two year olds the opportunity to be in a controlled setting, with limits, teaches self-control and respect for others.

Three year olds enjoy being around other children. Parallel play is a good way to interact and use language to communicate feelings and ask questions. Social graces are mastered by using "Please" and "Thank you." Friendships begin to develop. Three year olds will also feel comfortable approaching an adult for help. Some three year olds are ready to make that detachment from parents or caregiver.

Four year olds are enthusiastic, adventurous, and fun. Sharing becomes easier. They also have a lot of emotions, which can go from "I hate you" one minute to "I love you" the next. If a child has the opportunity to experience all the developments from birth to four, the child will grow into a competent and confident adult.

Reference: Dodge, Diane T., Colker, Laura J., and Heroman, Cate. (2002). *Creative Curriculum For Preschool (4th ed.)*. Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc.

Songs for Life Lessons



Submitted by Tom Lottman,
Research Director, Growing Sound

We pack our luggage for life's journey in the early years. We learn the language with which we will communicate with family, friends, coworkers and adversaries. We learn to read so that we can read to learn; achieving the knowledge and skills with which we will earn a living, give back to our community and raise the next generation. And very importantly, we become aware of ourselves and our feelings. We learn to control both our inward experiences and our outward expressions. These are the tools which we will use to make peace with ourselves, make ties to our friends, make a home with our spouse and make the future with our children. If we don't pack these social and emo-

tional skills into the luggage of early childhood, the journey to adulthood becomes challenging.

How do we learn these social and emotional skills? It happens through both experiences that emerge naturally within loving families, and the experiences that are orchestrated intentionally in early childhood education.

Unfortunately, for the most part, early childhood education has lacked the strategies for effectively teaching these critical skills. Traditionally, the social and emotional emphasis in early childhood classrooms was to find and fix the children who were out of control or who were at risk. The emerging

research on social and emotional development and its importance to early childhood education had not yet impacted the way teachers nurtured those strengths in the children in their care. Now, as the importance of social and emotional learning has become not only widespread, but widely mandated, the field seeks new paradigms to effectively nurture these skills.

Music is a unique teaching strategy for social-emotional learning. Early childhood educators and parents are well aware of songs as powerful teaching tools with young children. It seems safe to assert that almost no child has learned the alphabet without the accompaniment of the ABCs lyrical melody. And the use of songs in early education has evolved as a staple of

every language and cognitive skill curriculum. However, early education's embrace of social-emotional learning has not seen a comparable emergence of using songs as a teaching tool.

Music and lyrics represent a very effective means of social-emotional learning in early childhood. Very specifically, four types of songs can be key to instilling social-emotional knowledge and skills. These are: 1) "self-talk" songs, 2) experiential songs, 3) story songs, and 4) concept songs.

Winsler and colleagues (2009) provide a comprehensive review of research on the importance of self-talk or private speech in children's development. Early in life children use and internalize self-talk that becomes the basis of strongly held beliefs about themselves, other people and the world in general. This self-talk reinforces their perception of their own abilities or limitations, other people's benevolence or malice, and the overall safety or threat of the world in which they live. Early childhood educators are in a potent position to influence this self-talk toward the positive.

Growing Sound "self-talk" songs are designed to be "over-learned" so that the child so internalizes their message that it is automatically invoked in the face of a challenging task or a disappointment. For example, the song, *I Can Do It*, repeats this phrase often with the stipulation, "I put my heart and my mind to it." Children who have learned this song often sing the words softly to themselves when they encounter a difficult problem.

This internalized self-talk becomes the

basis for a growth mindset (Dweck, 2006). With a growth mindset, the child has truly internalized an association of effort with eventual success. She believes that her knowledge and intelligence grows with effort and perseverance. The child with a fixed mindset on the other hand believes that intelligence is fixed and effort is associated with failure. He avoids challenging tasks and gives up when a problem requires effort. He becomes more concerned with how he "looks" to others rather than how successfully he masters a skill. It is easy to see how the internalization of mastery self-talk becomes an essential component of school and life success.

Another type of song that is effective in teaching social-emotional skills is the experiential song. This type of song allows children to experience and practice the very skill early childhood professionals want them to acquire. For example, there is a critical skill developed in early childhood called effortful control or inhibitory control. It is the

ability when a child is "primed" to do a certain behavior, he is able to stop on cue and chose a sub-dominant behavior. This skill is not present in children with problems of impulse control. The song, *Self Control*, begins in a brisk upbeat tempo with the words, "I go fast, fast, fast. Fast, fast, fast is the way I go; and then I stop! Put it on hold, I got self control." Then the music slows to a crawl. The song gives children an intensely stimulating behavior followed by the requirement to inhibit that behavior.

Similarly, games like, *Red Light, Green Light* and *Simon Says* require the ability to effortfully exert control in inhibiting a primed behavior. The importance of effortful control to learning and school success has been well documented (Blair *et al.*, 2007).

The third type of songs are story songs. These are songs designed for children to listen to in order to help them experience the circumstances and emotional reactions of others, the beginning of



empathy. For example, the song, *Be Careful*, tells the story of Chris, a little girl being bumped and hassled by other children. She describes the situation and her reaction and asks the others to be respectful of her space. The song shows children how to see the perspective of another child, to understand feelings and reactions that may be different from their own, and to comply with requests from others to modulate their behavior. These are complex social skills essential to adapting within a cooperative community.

Finally, there are concept songs. Concept songs directly teach key ideas that may contradict existing attitudes or beliefs. For example, the song *Sometimes It Takes a Few Mistakes* teaches children how making mistakes can actually help them learn.

While there is a tendency to think of, and perhaps dismiss, children's songs as cute diversions, hopefully this description of self-talk, experiential, story and concept songs demonstrates their versatility in teaching social-emotional concepts and skills to young children.

While we often become preoccupied with the "emotional baggage" from early childhood that we drag through life, we fail to acknowledge the early years as a time when critical social-emotional capacities are packed in life's luggage to help us adapt along the way. Songs taught and enjoyed in the context of a loving relationship with a parent or teacher are a means of giving a child the social-emotional proficiency for school and life success.

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About Growing Sound

Growing Sound develops research based children's music that promotes social and emotional development. While many products focus on managing children's problem behaviors, Growing Sound is a proactive, strength-based approach to helping children discover the goodness in their lives and in themselves. Growing Sounds' creative productions are led by David Kisor, an award-winning singer, songwriter, composer, performer and teacher. The music of Growing Sound can be purchased by visiting www.growing-sound.com.



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Social and Emotional Skills Develop in the Earliest Years

Submitted by Barbara Tucker, West Virginia Early Childhood Transition

Society's wish for young children is to enter kindergarten ready to succeed. Readiness skills primarily focus on cognitive skills, early literacy, and early math. However, it is equally important to pay attention to the social and emotional skills that young children develop in their earliest years.

How children manage their feelings, follow directions, concentrate, and relate to other children and adults are predictors of how well they succeed with the transition to kindergarten.

A 2005 report entitled “Resources to Promote Social and Emotional Health and School Readiness in Young Children and Families” (www.nccp.org/publications/pub_648.html) provides information about resources and strategies to help children develop the social and emotional skills needed to succeed in school.

Although the resources and strategies in the guide focus on young children facing especially harsh early circumstances such as poverty and domestic violence, the interventions can promote successful school transitions for all children. Most young children are “eager to learn” and almost all are “hard-wired” with the cognitive, social, and emotional skills to be successful.

There are four core assumptions in the guide:

- The family plays the most important role in a young child's life.



- Responsibility for school readiness lies not with children, but with the adults who care for them and the systems that support them.
- The first five years of life are a critical developmental period.
- Child development occurs across equally important and interrelated domains—physical and motor, social and emotional, language, and cognitive.

If children do not flourish in kindergarten through second grade, they are less likely to do well in subsequent grades. A significant group of young children experience problems in developing the social, emotional, and behavioral approaches necessary to succeed in school.

Strategies to support parents and caregivers can make a difference because social, emotional, and cognitive learning are all interconnected in young children (more so than in older children). Parents who have learned how to better

manage young children's behavior report positive outcomes at home and at school.

Overall, the single most effective action that communities can take to help childcare providers and teachers ensure that young children (including infants and toddlers) enter school ready to succeed is to improve the quality of childcare and early learning experiences for them. Classroom-based strategies to help young children master social and emotional skills have been linked to improved reading ability.

Every encounter with a young child is an opportunity to promote social and emotional competence. If young children are around adults who create a rich language and reading environment, help them develop new social skills, and, above all, find and nurture their strengths, these fortunate children tend to have positive transition experiences.

A Close Look at Learning Environments

Submitted by Janet Dozier, Marshall University

What is happening in preschools? More and more we are hearing of preschoolers expelled or suspended from programs all over the United States. One state report found that preschoolers were expelled or suspended 34 times more than children in Kindergarten through 12th grade in the same state (Gilliam, Shabar, 2006). What is happening to our preschoolers? Or perhaps the question is not in the right place. What has happened to preschool programs?

Unrealistic Expectations

The first struggle preschool programs face is the overwhelming problem of trying to meet the needs of a very diverse population in regard to developmental level.

I visited a childcare classroom in which three year olds were expected to sit and participate in a group time that took almost 30 minutes. The teacher expressed the children became unruly during group time. She reported that these children were socially and emotionally immature. She noted that the hands and feet of these youngsters were constantly in motion. I wanted to scream, "YES! And they should be." I cannot imagine a healthy three year old who could attend a 30 minute group time without some major gross motor movement. Those children were not delayed, they were listening to their bodies. Those children were not socially and emotionally immature; they were behaving as normal three years old do.

Many preschool programs across our nation, and even our state, have unrealistic expectations for young children with regard to social-emotional development. When expectations are too high, children face repeated failure. The frustration of failure compiled upon failure creates an environment in which children act out purely on the basis of frustration.

Solutions:

- Look at and evaluate the goal. Is it a program goal or a personal goal for this child? Decide if the goal for this child is something valuable. Within the culture of school, there are times in which we place arbitrary value on procedures that really have little if any intrinsic value. For example, why is there such a high value on lining up children in straight lines? Yes, I understand the convention of moving groups of children through hallways, but is this really one of our top priorities as a life-skill? It would not make my top ten list of skills to make one successful in life.

- Assess each child's ability frequently. Make sure to set limits and goals that are consistent with the child's current level of successful attempts. Think about the individual child, not the milestone chart in the back of some textbook. Each child is unique and it is the uniqueness of the individual that makes us all valuable.
- Use moments of failure as times to teach the value of taking a risk and then evaluating the success or failure of the result. What we do well is often less telling of our ability than failing successfully, defined as identifying why we did what we did, why it did not work, and how to make it work next time. This author believes the most valuable tool in managing behavior is teaching a child to solve problems, rather than solving problems for the child.

Poor Room Environment

Many of children's failed attempts at social interaction could be remedied by providing a more hospitable room environment. The preschool age child is learning to be independent and to handle many of his or her needs without adult assistance; therefore, the room should be set up to accommodate independence. At the same time the child is egocentric. The child will only see issues from his or her own viewpoint. Room environment should support the child as an individual. Is the child outgoing and boisterous? Or is the child quiet and shy? Or does the child have special needs? A hospitable environment provides for the needs of each child.

Solutions:

- Provide materials that children will need for independence, such as paper towels and sponges for clean-up, at the level that is accessible to the child. View the child as a capable member of the learning community.
- Make sure there are spaces that a child can call his own. A cubby or crate to hold the child's valuables goes a long way to ensure the happy climate of the environment.
- Put the child in charge of his or her belongings. Teachers can be very sad with a child who has lost that very special "old red car", but at the same time allow the child to grow more independent by seeing the child as capable of preventing such a loss by changing some of his or her behavior.
- Egocentrism is a battle most people fight for a lifetime. Children are by far not the exception. An environment which supports role-playing and perspective-taking helps children to be less egocentric. Children are such ready learners that



when role playing they often acquire skills, language, and strategies to use when they encounter a problem for real.

- The individual child and his or her needs should be foremost in the mind of the teacher. What can I do to make the environment more accommodating to individual children, whether rowdy, shy or with special needs. If a child cannot access a portion of the room because it is restricted from her, she cannot learn from that portion. Some soft seating, some parallel play and access that is sufficiently wide enough to allow any child to participate are just some of the considerations a teacher should check. Make a checklist to ensure accessibility. Include items such as those mentioned. Then, get on your knees and mill about the room. What things can you no longer reach? If you cannot reach them, chances are a child cannot either. Modify the arrangement.

Children are Learning the Language

I am not very capable when it comes to making home repairs. When something is broken in our home, I am often even more frustrated when the right tool is not available to fix whatever is broken. Not wanting to be outdone, I set out to improvise. Sometimes my attempts at improvising are woefully unsuccessful. Now apply this same principle to children solving problems in the classroom. Language is the number one tool in the culture of the school classroom for problem solving, but if the child is unskilled with the language, then what? Anger and frustration can lead to bodily contact in an instant, with the child left in utter failure and the teacher equally frustrated, if not angry.

Solutions:

- Teach the language of problem solving. What is the problem? How can we fix it? The teacher may need to make some suggestions for resolution in order to scaffold the child toward proficiency in problem solving. What can you do? What can my other friends do to help? Never ask a child to say he is sorry. Chances are in the light of frustration and anger, the child will view his or her behavior as valid and reasonable. Teaching a child to say he is sorry teaches children to be social liars. This will not support their social competence or their emotional well-being.
- Teach what to do if the first solution does not work. Reflection when solving problems can be a strong component of success.
- If kicking and hitting are what has worked for the child in the past, affirm the hard work it takes to speak the language of problem-solving. The

child needs to hear the cues from the teacher that he or she has done what is expected and the problem has been solved.

Who Owns the Problem?

I remember graphically one occasion in which I was in a power struggle with a child (one from my family I might add) and in the middle of the struggle, I realized I was wrong. Now what I wondered? I did not want this child to see me as incompetent or unjust, yet at that moment, I was. I was afraid to admit I was wrong. I remember the pause that hung over this child and me like a dark cloud.

Solutions:

- I stopped! And so can you. Teachers are not called upon to be perfect, we are asked to be reasonable, fair, just and fallible. If you are wrong, stop and admit it. Tell the child and then solve the problem together. We cannot expect children to be good problem solvers if they never see us fail. You do not have to create these situations; they will arise on their own. If you own the problem, solve it.
- Ask yourself a litany of questions: Is the task that is being asked of the child too challenging or not challenging enough? Does this child have the needed equipment to perform the task? Have I provided sufficient support so that the child can be successful? Once you have the answers to those questions, you can move forward to solve the problem. The problem may not be the child's but that of the environment or (heaven forbid!) the teacher.

So what has happened in preschool programs? We have forgotten that children are developing. We have forgotten that they need to be taught. We have forgotten that curriculum happens in places. We have forgotten that teachers are human. We teach because we want to shape lives. I challenge you to make your learning environment the most hospitable place a child can visit.

Resources:

Gilliam, W and Shabar, G. (2006). *Preschool and Child Care Expulsion and Suspension Rates and Predictors in One State*. *Infants & Young Children* Vol. 19, No. 3, pp. 228–245.



Choosy Helps Sunbeam Early Learning Center Celebrate 30 Years

Submitted by Helen Post Brown, Director, Sunbeam Early Learning Center



Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it is Choosy! The big green martian who says, "Be Choosy Be Healthy!" Choosy visited Sunbeam Early Learning Center to help celebrate the center's 30th anniversary. The children at Sunbeam have been singing and dancing to Choosy songs for over five years. "I'm Moving I'm Learning", "My Heart Says Thanks" and "Choosy Freeze" are three of their favorites.

Choosy is the brain child of Dr. Linda Carson. Dr. Carson is the Ware Distinguished Professor at West Virginia University and the Director of the WV Motor Development Center. Professor Carson has many years of teaching experience and expertise in childhood motor development.

Professor Carson has developed award winning physical activity programs for infants, toddlers, pre-school, and elementary school age children in both land-based and water-based learning environments. The signature feature of Dr. Carson's play programs is a character named Choosy

who promotes healthy decision making by children and grownups. Dr. Carson and her team of trainers have worked with thousands of teachers, trainers, and parents as well as many public health professionals and their partners across the country. Choosy Kids was honored to be selected as the National Training Team for the Office of Head Start's "I Am Moving I Am Learning (IMIL)" initiative to combat childhood obesity.

Sunbeam Early Learning Center takes an active role in the West Virginia initiative, "I Am Moving I Am Learning" promoted by former First Lady Gayle Manchin and the Department of Health And Human Resources. Sunbeam's philosophy, curriculum, and food program support healthy eating and purposeful movement.

Sunbeam Early Learning Center has provided 30 years of excellent service to the children and families of Marion County.



Newly Formed West Virginia Early Childhood Advisory Council Up and Running

Submitted by Gretchen Grove-DeJarnett, ECAC Executive Manager

“After completing the planning and development phase, the West Virginia Early Childhood Advisory Council is up and running!” states Secretary of Education and the Arts, Kay Goodwin. “Governor Tomblin and I believe that this Council will be an invaluable asset to our state and will truly foster the necessary coordination and collaboration that our young children deserve. I’m very proud that the Council will be housed in my office.”

The West Virginia Early Childhood Advisory Council, created by Executive Order No. 9-10 on July 13, 2010, has been designed to be the revised PIECES and is charged with creating a high quality, coordinated system of services to support early childhood development in the state. The Council has received funding through a three-year grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that will support all the functions of the Council. This grant is also supported by a state match from the West Virginia Department of Education.

The WV Early Childhood Advisory Council is made up of representatives from many stakeholder groups including the West Virginia Department of Education, Higher Education Policy Commission, child care, Head Start, WV Birth to Three, In-home family education, child advocacy and the business community. “There is already tremendous work taking place in all

areas of early childhood development,” said Goodwin. “This Council will help to highlight our state’s strengths as well as to bring a renewed focus to those areas where improvement is still needed.”

This is not the first time that a “statewide early childhood collaborative” has existed. The state has gone through several councils and committees aimed at addressing early childhood issues. The WV Early Childhood Advisory Council aims to advance West Virginia’s early childhood system by strengthening efforts already underway; however, there are unique and new features to the Early Childhood Advisory Council that will increase its effectiveness. For example, for the first time, the Council has a full time Executive Manager dedicated solely to supporting the Council’s activities and initiatives. In addition to this, the fact that the Council is now housed within a state agency strengthens the ties between the early childhood community and the Governor’s office.

The Council’s work will be guided by three simple, yet ambitious belief statements:

- 1) All children in West Virginia should be healthy and ready to learn, have safe and nurturing environments, and have positive early learning experiences.
- 2) All families in West Virginia should

be respected as their child’s first and foremost teacher and have access to the resources to meet the individual needs of their children.

- 3) All communities in West Virginia should share responsibility for the well-being of all children and have a comprehensive system of services to support them.

The Council will focus its work on fostering collaborative leadership, ensuring service quality and availability; supporting the creation and implementation of early learning standards, ensuring that quality professional development is widely available; promoting family engagement and support, ensuring that planning, development and evaluation are based on sound data and research; and fostering open communication between the early childhood community and the public at large.

The Council meets quarterly with additional subcommittees and workgroups meeting in the interim. The Council meetings are opened to the public and each meeting includes an opportunity for public comment. The Council will launch its website (www.wvearlylearning.org) in the coming months. In the meantime, for more information or to learn how to submit agenda items for Council meetings, please contact ECAC Executive Manager, Gretchen Grove-DeJarnett, at (304) 558-2440 or gretchen.grove-dejarnett@wv.gov.

Child Abuse Prevention Grant Offers Free Learning Opportunities for Early Care Providers

Submitted by Debra Bowyer, Cabell County Family Resource Network

Session Dates:

Wednesday, April 27
Huntington

Wednesday, May 18
Morgantown

Prevent Child Abuse West Virginia—and its funding partners, the WV Children’s Trust Fund, the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation and the WV Department of Health and Human Resources—are providing a unique, statewide opportunity to strengthen families and help children grow up free from abuse and neglect.

“STRENGTHENING FAMILIES MADE S-I-M-P-L-E” retreats are currently scheduled in several locations around West Virginia and are designed to equip 100 early care and education leaders in West Virginia with the knowledge to build “Circles of Caring” (protective factors) using national, evidence-based Strengthening Families tools.

The sessions are designed specifically for: child care center and facility directors; family child care providers; Pre-k program leaders; Starting Points directors; Birth to Three service coordinators and practitioners; WV Strengthening Families grantee leadership teams; regional CCR&R early childhood specialist and behavior consultants; regional Head Start family services coordinators; and other programs that provide care and support to families with young children.

National research shows that building protective factors reduces child abuse and neglect by providing parents with what they need to parent effectively, even under stress. Participants will receive training and will go home with CD-ROM toolkits to immediately begin making low-cost and no-cost changes to their programs, and provide staff with everyday strategies to build protective factors (also known as Circles of Caring).

Application has been made for 4 hours of WV STARS credit and valuable educational resources will be given as door prizes. Space is limited to 40 individuals per session.

This training is made possible through partnership with innovation grant sites in Cabell and Wayne counties, and administered by the Cabell County Family Resource Network, with in-kind support from West Virginia Child Care Centers United, River Valley Child Development Services, United Way of the River Cities and additional partners.

To inquire about openings and request a registration form, contact Debra Bowyer, CCFRN, 625 Fourth Avenue, Huntington, WV 25701, (304) 697-0255, or email SFMadeSimple@gmail.com. For more information about the national Strengthening Families initiative, visit www.strengtheningfamilies.net.





West Virginia Celebrates at SECA

Submitted by Suzi Brodof, Executive Director, River Valley Child Development Services



The West Virginia Association for Young Children (WVAYC) hosted a reception at the Southern Early Childhood Association (SECA) conference in January to honor Nancy Cheshire as she assumed the role of President–Elect of SECA. Nancy is the person who can weave a story from a stone, who can use a tea party to show how children build relationships, and who best exemplifies what early childhood means in West Virginia.

Though Nancy is retired from teaching early childhood classes at Fairmont State, she continues to participate in activities related to the early childhood field and present workshops at conferences around the state. She has represented West Virginia on the SECA Board for several years and built the respect and friendship of early childhood professionals throughout the region. Twenty-five early childhood professionals from all over West Virginia happily celebrated with Nancy at the reception. They included staff from Mountainheart, River Valley Child Development Services, Sunbeam Early Learning Center, Bridgeport United Methodist Church, Glenville College and West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources.

Jaime Price Receives Terri Lynn Lokoff National Teacher Award

Submitted by Stephanie Geneseo, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood West Virginia

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® WEST VIRGINIA is pleased to announce the first scholarship recipient to graduate with her associate degree since the development of T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® WEST VIRGINIA in December 2008. Jaime Lynn Price has completed her associate degree in Early Childhood Education from Pierpont Community and Technical College.

Jaime is a teacher and assistant director at Discovery Corner Day Care in Elkins, West Virginia, and is currently registered in the bachelor degree program at Fairmont State and plans to continue her education in early childhood.

Jaime is a strong advocate not just for the children and families she works with, but for the staff she develops each day. Jaime attended the T.E.A.C.H. reception on February 24 and received a certificate for her accomplishments.

In addition to receiving her first degree in early childhood education, Jaime has won the the Terri Lynne Lokoff Child Care Foundation (TLLCCF) National Teacher award. Jaime will be honored on April 14 at the Please Touch Children's Museum in Philadelphia, PA. She will attend an open house and have the opportunity to meet teachers across the nation who will be honored at this presentation for their projects and advocacy for children's education.



“We are certain that Jaime Price will be a strong advocate in representing the dedication of our West Virginia early childhood teachers and we are honored to see her receive this award,” commented Stephanie Geneseo, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood WV Specialist.

When asked what motivated her decision to apply for the Terri Lynn Lokoff Teacher Award Project, Jaime said, “A lot of times people who work in child care rarely receive appreciation. It is an honor to be recognized for the work my center and I do to promote awareness to our parents.” The project Jaime developed was entitled “Developmental Documentation.” The entry began as a way for her to receive much needed camera equipment for her center so that she could share with parents the

value of their child's play and how play reflects the developmental milestones necessary to promote growth and development in the early years. “It is crucial to have the tools and resources we need. The digital camera, presented at the teacher award ceremony, will allow our center to document milestones of cognitive, social, and gross motor development and give parents purpose to what their child is learning through play,” Jaime said.

The Terri Lynn Lokoff Foundation (TLLCCF) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to making America better by improving early care and education. The focus is to improve the quality of programs that care for and educate children from birth through age five.

The Foundation recognizes that quality early care and education depends on the expertise of teachers and providers. To that end, the Foundation honors and rewards early education teachers dedicated to excellence, supports non-profit and nonsectarian child care centers, provides art and cultural programs to child care centers serving low income areas, and advocates for early care and education every day.

TLLCCF's funds have benefited thousands of children, child care centers, child care teachers and educational scholarships at many outstanding child care agencies and academic institutions throughout the nation. TLLCCF is committed to ensuring the availability of affordable, high-quality child care for all children in order to reap the educational, societal and economic benefits that will follow for all Americans.

The societal benefits generated as a result of children attending high-quality early care and education programs are documented in the "High/Scope Perry Preschool Study through Age 40" summary, which concludes that every dollar invested in early care and education has a return of \$17. The long-term benefits translate into savings on remedial and special education services, reducing the number reliant on welfare and entering the prison system. Children who have had the benefit of high-quality early care and education contribute to society as taxpayers, with higher earning potential. The children are also at a lower risk for becoming teenage parents and drug users.

In August 1987, Fred and Kay Lokoff founded the TLLCCF to honor the

memory of their daughter Terri, who died tragically in an auto accident. Terri earned a bachelor's degree in early childhood education and worked as a child care provider. She had an extraordinary sense of devotion and love for her work and felt strongly about the need to improve the quality of child care. The Terri Lynn Lokoff Foundation works diligently every day to fulfill Terri's efforts.

The TLLCCF mission strives to:

- Improve the quality of child care for all children.
- Support and elevate the status of child care teachers and providers.
- Raise awareness of the need for affordable, quality child care.
- Partner with businesses and government in making child care a priority.

TLLCCF accomplishes this in part through the National Child Care Teacher Awards™, Child Care Center Enhancement Grants, Museums to Go, conferences, and scholarships.

For more information about T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® WEST VIRGINIA please visit www.wvearly-childhood.org.

“ We are certain that Jaime Price will be a strong advocate in representing the dedication of our West Virginia early childhood teachers and we are honored to see her receive this award. ”

Project Approach: How it Worked in My Classroom

Submitted by Carrie Adams, Graduate Student, Marshall University

In a culture that is pushing us to prepare our students for kindergarten, where paperwork abounds, and the responsibilities of the teacher seem to be piling ever higher, how best to teach our students can sometimes be overwhelming. So often we are told that our students need to write their name, tie their shoes, count to 100, and begin reading simple words. This is what successful students do.

However, research is indicating that children who have better social skills are more successful later in life than those students who have memorized academic facts (Murphy, L., 2009). Research is also showing the value in project approach learning, which is child-centered and encourages social development. By definition, “a project is an in-depth investigation of a topic worth learning about...[T]he key feature of a project is that it is a research effort deliberately focused on finding answers to questions about a topic” (Katz, 1994, p. 1). The project approach focuses on children initiating their own investigation, asking their own questions, and constructing knowledge through inquiry.

The goals of being academically prepared for kindergarten can be a little discouraging for me. You see, I teach in a preschool special needs room. All of my students have Individualized Education Plans (IEP). Yes, I said all; we currently have no typical peers in our class. All of my students receive speech services, the majority receive

occupational therapy services, most are not potty trained, and many were assessed as having cognitive delays. I am not telling you this so you will feel sorry for my students. Don't. They are happy, resilient children who are constantly progressing and will do well in life. I am giving you this information about my class so you will understand the challenges that my students face, and you will see what they are capable of, in spite of their struggles.

Most of the research I have read about project approach is aimed at classes made up of typically developing children, not my class. Most of the books about project approach talk about having class discussion and constructing knowledge through these discussions. They don't mention what to do if your entire class has speech difficulties, some having no speech at all. However, in spite of the lack of research aimed at my kind of class, I still felt very strongly about the value of the project approach and wanted to implement it in my classroom. But, when I began thinking about everything I'd learned about project approach, and how I'd implemented it in previous settings (with all typical peers), I became overwhelmed. My children struggle to attend to tasks for extended periods of time, most cannot verbalize questions they want to investigate. How was I going to do a project? Then I was reminded that project approach is not a one size fits all method. Some key factors to keep in mind are:

- Children don't have to work for long periods every day on the project; they may only work for 10 minutes or so (however long they are interested).
- Children will show you what they want to learn, even if they can't verbalize it. Observation of their interests is key when they don't have the language.
- Projects need to be rich. This gives you more ways to keep your students engaged and it gives more opportunities to include all skill levels.
- Not every child has to show an interest; however, no child should be excluded because of a disability. If every child in your classroom can't participate, it is not appropriate for your class.
- You don't have to know all the answers to do a project. When you allow yourself to become a co-learner with your students, you show them it's okay to not know everything.

With these thoughts in mind I began brainstorming what project we should do. I noticed an interest in trains, so I began collecting materials and constructing ideas about how we could investigate trains. Well, this idea was great until fire safety week. We had placed a few firefighter things in our classroom and that was it. Fire safety was our new project! The children didn't need words to show me how fascinated they were with this topic. We all took turns dressing as firefighters. We

built fire stations and took our matchbox fire trucks to “fires” all over our room. The train set was no longer of any interest. But that was okay, we were learning so much through this rich topic that was so relevant and important, trains no longer mattered!

I began placing materials around the room that related to fire. We finger-painted with yellow and red, which we discovered made orange. We built fire stations and burning houses (our houses had flames we made inside). We practiced running to the firefighter and not away. We dressed as firefighters every day for weeks. We role played needing help and helping one another. Some of these things I introduced, some of them the children created on their own. I asked open-ended questions about what we were doing to help them construct knowledge. They asked me questions, which led us to look for the answers in books we had checked out from the library. The children even had the opportunity to ask the real firefighters questions when they came to visit.

After the firefighters visited, we decided it would be fun to make our own fire truck. I asked the children what we should use to make it. I gave them options because many of them don't have the language or prior knowledge to tell me what they needed. But when I provided them with options of materials that had been placed in the classroom, they knew what to do. They told me all the things their truck needed – wheels, lights, sirens, a steering wheel, ladders, hoses, and windows. Some of this was verbalized, other parts were shown to me in pictures and on match-

box fire trucks. They worked as a group to build their very own fire truck. This was a great way to build social skills. Some of the higher functioning children helped some of their peers by giving them materials. For instance, Daniel is a child who is older and more advanced cognitively than Andrew, so Daniel would decide what materials they needed to create something and then give them to Andrew so he could participate. Daniel would cut pieces for the ladder and then give Andrew the pieces to glue to the truck. I was so proud to see what my students were capable of when given the opportunity. They demonstrated tremendous growth in more ways than I can express. I can say with full assurance that every area of development was addressed through this project. However, the moments that truly stuck out were the ones of my students working together.

The social development that occurred through this project was incredible. Some of my students had not really shown much success in cooperative play until this project. Andrew, the student I mentioned earlier, is a good example of this. Andrew faces many struggles, but his face lit up when Daniel began working with him, and he began to successfully interact with a peer. Having such a positive reaction from Andrew helped Daniel become more confident and willing to interact with peers, which was previously a challenge for him.

Another one of my favorite success stories is of Adam. Adam has autism and no functional language, and he participated in our project. He painted our

truck and also began to use the phrase “ready-set-go” when he wanted us to race our matchbox fire trucks. This was a monumental development! Adam now enjoys taking turns with the phrase “ready-set-go”. If I say, “ready,” he will say, “set-go.” This is one of his favorite games, and is leading to other phrases and more social interaction for Adam.

Even though I was nervous at first to attempt project approach in my special needs classroom, I am very glad I did. Our project has been over for about a month now, but I can still see its effects in my classroom. More cooperative play, turn-taking, and problem solving are just a few of these things. If you are reading this and thinking, “it sounds nice on paper, but you haven't met my class,” please don't count yourself out too soon. If you've never done a project, start small. Watch for the interest in your classroom and build from there. Also, accept the reality that sometimes your children just won't be in project mode.

I know how challenging it must seem, but my students proved to me that challenges are meant to be overcome. I encourage you to challenge yourself and your students—the results will astound you!

References

- Katz, L.G. (1994). *The project approach*. Champaign, IL: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education.
- Murphy, L. (2009). *Play: The foundation that supports the house of higher learning*. Rochester, NY: Ooey Goey Inc.



The Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist program is a statewide training opportunity for those working in early care and education, based on a professional partnership between child care providers and their employers.

The program began in West Virginia in 1989 and has since been adopted in more than 30 states. The program has received national recognition and is expanding nationwide as a model for child care providers.

Through the apprenticeship program, students receive on-the-job training to help develop skills and gain knowledge that will open new doors for future opportunities. After having completed four semesters of course work, and documenting 3200 – 4000 on-the-job training hours, apprentices become eligible to apply for their US Department of Labor certificate. After successfully completing the program, graduates are eligible to further their professional development with one of the several articulation agreements in place with community colleges throughout the state. The program is also very valuable to employers. The ACDS program develops a more informed and productive employee, which tends to decrease staff turnover and reduce training expenses.

ACDS: A Successful Program for Early Childhood Educators

Submitted by Sherrie Barrett, ACDS State Coordinator

Many past Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist (ACDS) participants have benefitted from the program and have shared their thoughts about the program.

Gail Ronat from Raleigh County began as an apprentice and is now an instructor. According to Gail, “The ACDS program has changed my life tremendously. I needed to take the course to keep my job and was terrified because I had been out of school for many years.” After Gail completed the ACDS program, she went on to earn her Bachelor of Arts degree in Education from Concord College and a teaching certification in Early Childhood. She then attended the ACDS Instructors Academy. “The Academy gave me a wealth of information and practice in teaching adults,” Gail said. “The instructors helped plan activities to prepare us for developing lessons using the established curriculum and for implementing the lessons. I believe my experience in the ACDS program, both as a student and an instructor, has positively impacted how I teach.”

When Amanda Meadows from Cabell County first learned that she would be required to take the ACDS course to keep her job, she thought, “Okay, if I

have to do this to stay in a position that I truly love, then I’ll take this class.” On the night of orientation, Amanda walked the 24 blocks back to her home thinking, “this is going to be a long fifteen weeks.” As time went on, Amanda realized that it wasn’t only her job that was worth it, so was the ACDS class. “Although I have enjoyed building new and lasting relationships with people in my field, I have also appreciated how much I have learned,” Amanda said. She is also appreciative of how her instructors make sure that everyone understands the material, presenting it in so many different ways (through lecture, large and small group activities, games, and projects) that she says it is almost impossible not to learn and have fun in their classes. “I am only half way through my ACDS classes and I feel like my life has improved in almost every area (professionally and personally) because of them,” Amanda said.

The ACDS program has much to offer to those working in the early care and education field. For information on how to bring the ACDS program to your community, please contact Sherrie Barrett at 304-523-0433. You can also email your questions to sbarrett@rvcds.org or visit www.wvacds.org.

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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



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.

Parent Blocks

NEWSLETTER



"Providing resources to parents throughout West Virginia"
Volume 8, Issue 2, Spring 2011

What is Social-Emotional Development?

Children grow and learn by developing positive relationships, which teach them about family and community and the contributions they can make. Supporting the social and emotional development of children during the formative years of early childhood is essential to their well-being and success in life and school.

Social and emotional development involves positive self concept, appropriate social interactions and relationships, knowledge of family and community, and positive approaches to learning.

Here are a few ideas to explore

social and emotional development with your children.

- Make emotion faces in the mirror. You can explore happy faces, sad faces, surprised faces, angry faces and more.

- Share a loaf of bread with the birds or ask your child to help water the plants. Explain that living things need to be taken care of to grow.

- Encourage your child to develop independence by making simple choices. For example, "Would you like an orange or an apple for a snack?"



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.

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Visit our website at www.wvearlychildhood.org

Milestones of Social Emotional Development

Part of the development in children includes milestones in social and emotional growth. Social and emotional development can be harder to determine than physical growth because it includes interactions and relationships with peers and adults. It is important to remember that each child develops differently and in his or her own way.

What follows is a guideline for some typical milestones in social and emotional development.

1-3 months

At 1-3 months, a child will typically:

- Begin to develop a social smile
- Enjoy playing with other people and may cry when play stops
- Become more communicative and expressive with face and body
- Imitate some movements and facial expressions

4-7 months

At 4-7 months, a child will typically:

- Enjoy social play
- Enjoy mirror images
- Respond to other people's expression of emotion

8-12 months

At 8-12 months, a child will typically:

- Appear shy or anxious with strangers
- Cry when mother or father leaves
- Enjoy imitating people
- Show specific preferences for certain people and toys
- Prefer mother and/or regular caregiver over all others
- Repeat sounds or gestures for attention
- Begin to finger-feed himself
- Extend arm or leg to help when being dressed

12-24 months

At 12-24 months, a child will typically:

- Imitate behavior of others
- Become enthusiastic about company or other children
- Demonstrate increasing independence
- Begin to show defiant behavior
- Display episodes of separation anxiety

24-36 months

At 24-36 months, a child will typically:

- Separate easily from parents
- Express a wide range of emotions
- Object to major changes in routine

3-4 years old

At 3-4 years old, a child will typically:

- Become interested in new experiences
- Cooperate/play with other children
- Play "mom" or "dad"
- Become more inventive in fantasy play
- Begin to dress and undress with assistance
- Begin to be more independent
- Possess inability to distinguish between fantasy and reality
- Begin to have imaginary friends or see monsters

4-5 years old

At 4-5 years old, a child will typically:

- Want to please and be with friends
- Begin to agree to rules
- Like to sing, dance and act
- Show more independence

If you have questions about your child's development, contact your family's primary care provider. You can also contact West Virginia Birth to Three at 1-866-321-4RAU or Preschool Special Education Services at 1-800-642-8541.

Are We Feverphobic???

Submitted by Sarah Hicks, RN, Nurse Health Consultant

A clinical report in the March issue of *Pediatrics*, published by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), discusses fevers and the possibility of overuse of fever reducers when it comes to managing fevers. The article states that fever is one of the most common symptoms managed by pediatricians and one of the most frequent causes of parent/caregiver concern.



Studies have found that parents/caregivers may administer fever reducers even when there is minimal or no fever, due to their belief that the child must maintain a “normal” temperature.

The AAP feels that fevers are a normal benefiting part of the infectious process and helps to fight infection, and that alone it is not an illness. They state that fevers do not worsen the course of illness or cause long term neurologic complications. So, the AAP feels that when treating a child with a fever, the goal is to increase comfort, rather than focusing on the “number” or getting the child’s temperature back to “normal.”

When deciding about treatment, it is best to look at the overall picture of the child, not just the number on the thermometer. What is the general well being of the child? Is she able to be active and play? Is he hydrated? Does she have signs of serious illness?

When giving fever-reducing medications, it is important to follow instructions very carefully.

Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen are the most common and most effective fever reducers in children. However, both medications do carry risks if administered improperly. Studies have found that almost half of parents administer incorrect doses. Dosing

should always be based on weight, and not the child’s age.

Another finding in this article was that many parents/caregivers wake sleeping children to administer fever-reducing medications; however, 80 percent of the pediatricians asked would prefer the child continues sleeping and dose upon waking, if needed.

Fever is cause for immediate concern and physician care is necessary when heat stroke is suspected, when a child less than 3 months of age has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher, or any child with a temperature of 104 degrees or higher. Children with temperatures below those ranges should be treated based on well-being, activity level, hydration levels, and signs of illness as recommended by the child’s health care provider.

To read the entire article in *Pediatrics*, visit www.pediatrics.org/cgi/content/full/127/3/580.

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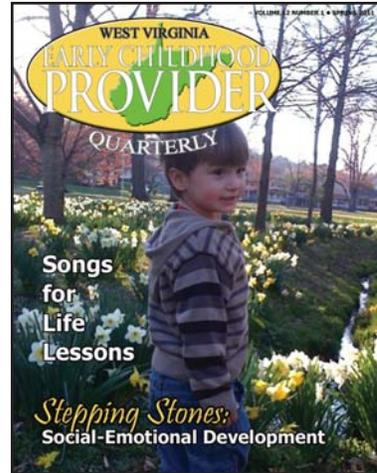
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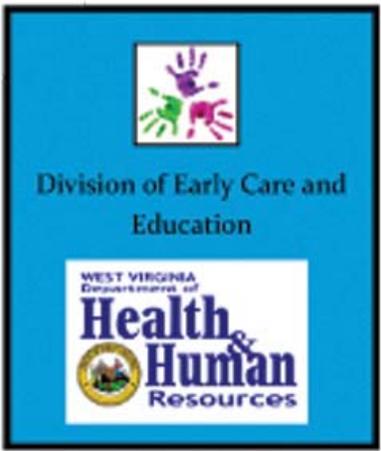
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▶ Wednesday, October 5, 2011

What:
5th Annual Child Care
Center Directors' Meeting

Where:
Village Square, Clarksburg
More information to come late summer!



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