

The Child Care Professional
The Newsletter of the
WKU Child Care Resource & Referral
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Moving On Up the Ladder

*Kim McIntyre,
Professional
Development
Coordinator*



How do you get a better job that is rewarding and challenging, provides a variety of opportunities, and has a better salary and benefits within the early childhood field? Look at

where you are now and where you want to be; what steps do you need to take to move on up the ladder? Do you need to obtain more training or experiences? Do you need to pursue a credential or degree? Would you like to mentor or train others? Does the ladder seem to change directions and dead end, as the stairs in the "Harry Potter" movie?

The KIDS NOW Initiative's Professional Development Council has been working hard to build Kentucky's early childhood career ladder for you. They have been working hard to develop a seamless system of early childhood professional development training and education that will meet the needs of all early childhood professionals, beginning with employees just entering the field and proceeding through to those with a master's degree, in which the training and education builds upon itself and flows to the next level.

Recommendations have been made by the Professional Development Council for implementation of a state-wide classification system to identify training according to levels,

with beginning levels aimed at those with limited knowledge gaining an introduction of content, and higher levels aimed at those with more training and experience building on increased knowledge and skill. This would help you choose and attend training that is more effective and meaningful, instead of sitting through training and listening to something you have heard a hundred times.

The Council has also been working on the Entry-Level Certificate, mentioned on the Stars for KIDS NOW Childcare Quality Rating System Standards Chart, which will be called the "Commonwealth Child Care Credential." This credential will provide those just entering the field with a realistic goal and method of recognition for obtaining 60 training hours, which is half of the required hours for a Child Development Associate Credential (CDA). Look for more information regarding this credential in the New Year!

Other Council activities toward upgrading Kentucky's professional development system include recommendations for the Director's Credential and the Trainer's Credential, which will also become rungs on the professional development career ladder in Kentucky within the near future. Several current directors and assistant directors have already expressed an interest in pursuing these credentials when they become available.

Wherever you may be on the career ladder, it is exciting and comforting to know the KIDS NOW Initiative is strengthening the ladder and placing supports along the way to help you succeed. Remember to acknowledge your strengths, resources, and interests, then set and accomplish realistic goals one step at a time. Don't give up, and be sure to celebrate your accomplishments, no matter how high the ladder seems to be!

Brain Research & Environments for Young Children

Sherri Meyer, WKU CCR&R

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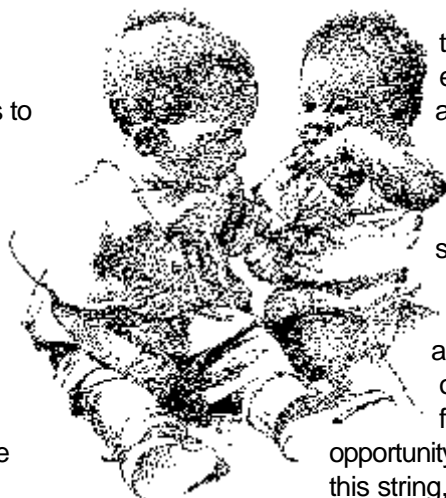
ordinator

Ever wonder how you can help young children develop their brain function? Ever wonder what needs to be in the children's learning environment that will help to develop the brain? There are many simple things that adults can do to help children develop their brain through rest, nutrition and air, relationships, and toys and activities.

Children's brain function can be enhanced if children have restful sleep at night and rest times during the day. Sleep and rest times provide children with the opportunity to reorganize the brain.

Children need the opportunity to eat foods rich in protein (meats, cheeses), fatty acids, and leafy green vegetables. Offering these types of foods will provide the children with the opportunity to learn about eating healthy foods. It is important to offer children complex carbohydrates such as fruit and less simple carbohydrates like cookies. The brain also needs WATER. Thirsty brains can not think! Brains also need oxygen to stay alert. In addition to going outside for fresh air, non-poisonous plants in the classroom will increase the oxygen in the air.

Children need to feel safe. Feeling safe will allow them the opportunity to learn better and let them focus on the learning instead of guarding



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themselves from danger. Creating an environment where children are safe, and also feel safe, is a critical responsibility for adults.

The brain wires itself for problem solving within the first four years of life.

We, as parents and teachers, should offer young children toys like puzzles and blocks that will encourage this skill of problem solving. Toys and materials for young children should also offer the opportunity to learn cause and effect ("If I pull on this string, the toy will come to me"). Toys should also be multi-sensory since the more senses that are used in learning, the more likely children will be engaged in processing the information. Remember that repetition strengthens the brain connections.

Color and novelty can alert the brain. Babies will notice reds, blues, and greens. Bright colors alert us and dark colors calm us. Since novelty or change alerts



the brain, rotate your toys! But be careful not to change too much too quickly. Too much change too fast will cause children to be on guard rather than in a learning mode. One important thing to remember is not to over stimulate children. Too much stimulation, such as too many things hanging from the ceiling while the walls are covered from the floor to the ceiling, will cause children not to be able to focus.

Children need space to move for their motor development. Babies need space to crawl, roll, and walk. Toddlers need space to do the same movements, but will also begin to run. The preschool years are the peak years for motor development, so begin when the children are infants by offering space for movement!

The social/emotional growth of young

children can be enhanced by building relationships and including music and movement activities. Singing and moving will help children to develop the skill of patterns, reduce anxiety, make us feel happy, and increase auditory discrimination.

Building a baby's brain can occur all day every day with the variety of activities and opportunities that we allow young children to experience. The next time you are interacting with a young child, remember the importance that your time, attention, and actions have on the development of the child and in their brain development!

Information gathered from Child Care Information Exchange, 7/01. "Brain Research and It's Implications for Early Childhood Programs" by Pam Schiller

Greetings from the New Family Child Care Coordinator

Deane Oliva, Family Child Care Coordinator

Hi! I'm Deane Oliva, the new CCR&R Family Child Care Coordinator. I'd like to introduce myself to you. Let's start with how you say my name. It is either D-knee or Dean-ee.

I have been working with children and youth for many, many years. As a teenager, I was a playground instructor and taught roller skating! Later, I went off to Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio. I will never forget my first full time off-campus college job. I was an assistant to the Director of Volunteers of a large institution for children. One day I was supervising a class of youngsters finger-painting when an advocacy group from the governor's office approached our room. One enthusiastic youngster, with paint dripping from both hands, turned, broke into a grand smile, raised hands high and ran straight toward the group of dignitaries shouting "Mommie!" Though I never knew much about football, in that instant of panic, I learned a new skill - how to make an interception!

After I graduated from college, I worked as a social caseworker in New York City, assisting over 90 families a month. Then I began helping children in foster care adjust to living between

two families - a birth family, usually young and struggling from THE CITY and a foster family, usually middle aged and middle class, in the suburbs. I spent the next several years working as a psychologist, helping mentally "challenged" adults and children at Hudson River Psychiatric Center. We had a large number of autistic children. At that time, many professionals believed that autism was the result of the child's reaction to a cold and distant mother. Physicians told parents to institutionalize their children and try to forget them! Some of our kids never had visitors. Because of the professional opinions of the day, many did not receive educational or therapeutic services. You can guess what lack of stimulation, little activity and lack of a nurturing environment did to their growth. These children suffered major developmental delays. Yet, on the positive side, once structured programming was begun and consistently delivered, improvement, while slow, was marked, visible, and continuous. Parents began visiting and children entered the public school system.

Working with autistic children, made me challenge the view that this syndrome had an

emotional basis. I began to explore neurological causes and became so enthusiastic about learning more about brain organization that I returned to school to obtain first a Master's Degree from The New School for Social Research in New York City and then a Ph.D. from what is now the George Peabody College of Vanderbilt University. At Peabody, I took a course from Susan Gray, one of the pioneers in early childhood. I clearly remember her tales of traveling to Washington to get more money for child care and Head Start programs. She related that she would put on her pretty dress, high heels, white gloves and wide brimmed hat and proceed to charm the good ole boys in our nation's capitol.

In 1977, I became "Dr. O," the neuro-psychologist, and for many years have had a successful private practice, assessing persons who have been in car wrecks, or had developmental, learning, behavioral, or medical problems. In addition to testing, I have also been a consultant for many agencies. For example, on several occasions since 1977, I have worked as a consultant with Head Start in the southern states. It was in the Head Start centers in Middle Tennessee that I first learned the power of music. These classrooms were always filled with song. Teachers were rated on the number of positive statements that they made to their students and, not surprisingly, teachers who sang to their students, often rated higher than their peers.

Being a full time psychologist takes its toll. One gets tired of always seeing persons in

crisis. Although I love my private practice and enjoyed my years in such jobs as Director of Psycho-logical Services at Cumberland Hall Hospital, Clinical Director of Hillsboro Rehabilitation Center, and as a school psychologist for Warren County, I was also happy to do different things. That's why I have often combined my psychological services with jobs with a different focus. In Nashville, I was editor and consultant to TRAVELHOST magazine, worked as a Real Estate agent, and cooked the food for the Belle Carol Riverboat cruises. In Bowling Green, I opened a community education center called Cogenisys Learning Labs. At the Learning Lab, we teach computer classes, have summer camps, enrichment groups, and tutoring classes.

Neuro-psychologists study brain behavior relationships. In recent years there has been an explosion of information about the developing brains of children. It is an exciting time for psychologists, educators and caregivers. Now we have research to prove what we in the field have known for a long time: how we interact with young children profoundly affects development. What we do matters greatly! I became so excited that I began looking for new opportunities to grow and share.

When this Family Child Care Coordinator position became available at CCR&R, I knew that it was a professional adventure that I wanted to take. I am glad that the team chose to offer it to me. I look forward to meeting and working with the family child care providers.

Diaper Rash: Is it Spreading?

Amy S. Hood, CCR&R Infant & Toddler Consultant

Janie Sailors, Health Specialist, Region IV Head Start Quality Improvement Centers

What is diaper rash? How did my baby get diaper rash? How can I make it go away?

Did I do something wrong? These are some of the most commonly asked questions from parents and caregivers. The term "diaper rash" is used to describe a skin irritation in the diaper area. Diaper rash is quite common. This rash is often found in children under the following conditions: babies eight to ten months old,

babies whose bottoms are not kept clean and dry, babies who have frequent stools (especially if left unchanged through the night), babies who begin to eat solid food. and babies on antibiotics. Frequently, chemicals in the urine or stool will begin irritating the skin, especially if the diaper is left on too long. Changes in the digestive system can lead to irritation as children begin to eat solid foods. Chemicals in the cloth diaper, leftover

soap and softener, and chemicals added to disposable diapers to increase absorbency may also lead to skin irritation.

How do I know it is diaper rash?

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, diaper rash usually begins as redness or small bumps on the lower abdomen, genitals, buttocks and thigh folds. With care, this type of rash will usually clear in about three to four days. Yeast infections can also cause a rash on the lower abdomen, genitals, and thigh folds, but hardly ever on the buttocks. If the rash is more widespread, it could be a condition other than diaper rash and a physician should be seen.

How do you treat diaper rash? The best treatment and preventive measure for diaper rash is frequent changes and cleaning. Wipes can be used, but be aware some may cause further irritation. Soap and water is usually the best choice. Air is a great healer! When possible, slipping the diaper off and allowing the child to be diaper free for a while can actually

help heal the irritated area. A generation ago, talcum powder was a common treatment for diaper rash. Today's health specialists do not recommend talcum powder or medicated powders in the diaper area, because it may be inhaled and cause respiratory distress. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends if a diaper rash occurs, use a drying lotion for a moist rash. If the rash persists after two to three days, the child's pediatrician should be contacted. Even though almost every baby will have diaper rash at some time, research has shown that babies who are breastfed have diaper rash less often.

Even with the best of care, babies may develop a diaper rash. Parents and caregivers must not feel at fault. Remember it is very important to be able to recognize diaper rash, treat it correctly, and seek a physician's care if the rash persists or spreads.

Quality Care Costs

Operating an early childhood program is very expensive and it is necessary to charge a fee that allows programs to meet their financial obligations. Although the fees are generally reasonable, the cost of child care can place a tremendous burden on families, especially low-income families. Child care can take up to 30% of a family's income. Financial child care assistance is important so that children of low income families have access to regulated and quality child care. When families benefit from child care financial assistance, child care homes and centers also benefit.

Butler	\$38.66
Edmondson	\$12.10
Hart	\$25.97
Logan	\$240.03
Metcalfe	\$20.00
Monroe	\$47.60
Simpson	\$79.38
Warren	\$1,391.29

Please pass the information along about the opportunity to donate to this worthy cause. Maybe we will see the funds in our BRADD area grow and be helpful to the children in our communities.

Kentuckians can donate money towards child care assistance when renewing their vehicle registration. This money could be used to help the families afford child care, but the donated amount is too low to make much difference at this time. The amount of the donation received thus far per county is noted below:

Allen	\$24.44
Barren	\$268.66

Child Care Assistance:

It's Only A Phone Call Away

Do you know someone who has trouble paying for child care? Well, if so, they may be eligible to participate in the Child Care Assistance Program. This is designed to assist parents who have a gross income less than 165% of poverty. This is based on family size and the gross income of the family. The Child Care Assistance Program can assist parents further to verify if their family would qualify for child care assistance. Encourage parents who may benefit to call (270) 746-7072 for additional information.

New Brain Research Resources Available

Several *Beginnings Workshop* training material sets on brain development have been published by Child Care Information Exchange. For more information call (800) 221-2864 or go to www.ChildCareExchange.com.

Brain Research and Childhood Education: Implications for Educators by Doris Bergen and Juliet Coscia is a practical book that answers some of the questions that educators have about brain research. This book helps sort out the facts from unsubstantiated claims regarding its implications for education. For information about ordering this book, contact the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) at (800) 423-3563 or click on their web page at www.acei.org.

Looking for Staff?

The WKU Career Services Center is sponsoring a Spring Job Fair on Thursday, March 14, 2002 (11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.) at the South Campus. This job recruiting event is for employers to meet local high school students, WKU students, graduating students and alumni who are looking for permanent positions, co-op and internship opportunities, and summer employment. For more information contact the Career Services Center at 270-745-3095.

National Child Care Association Conference

The National Child Care Association (NCCA) will hold its 2002 conference in San Antonio, Texas from March 7-10. The conference offers center directors and owners keynotes and workshop presentations on a wide range of issues in the successful management of quality child care programs. In addition, there will be opportunities for nine hours of continuing education, networking with fellow owners and directors, checking out the newest products and services for centers, and center tours. For details, go to the NCCA web site at www.NCCANET.org.

School Age Forum: "Reach for the Stars"

Sherri Meyer, Coordinator

School Age teachers this is for you!! The 2002 Kentucky Coalition for School Age Child Care will be hosting their 13th Annual Conference. The forum will be held February 22 and 23, 2002. Thursday, February 21 will be a pre-conference for Directors only! The forum will be filled with educational workshops for school age child care providers.

The forum will be held in Louisville at the Executive West. Pre-registration deadline is January 18, 2002. The fee for the pre-conference day is \$50. Registration fee for Friday and Saturday is \$105 or for either Friday or Saturday the fee is \$80 for just that day. If you are a member of the Kentucky Coalition for School Age Child Care (KYCSACC) the costs are reduced.

If you would like more information about the forum or to join KYCSACC, you can call (859) 494-0253.

Don't forget that the WKU CCR&R also sponsors School Age Child Care training opportunities. These workshops focus only on school age child care providers and will be offered this month (January 2002) and also again in April and July. Plan to attend!

age 12 nearly 70% of children have the beginning stages.

Establishing the habit of being physically active at a young age is a first step toward life long health. It is important for adults to show children that being physically active is valued. As role models, teachers and parents should let children see them physically active and having fun. Activities like walking, hiking, dancing, biking, or swimming can provide exercise and may also be enjoyed by many. Sensitivity is imperative because overweight children may feel uncomfortable about participating in certain activities. Finding physical activities that aren't embarrassing or too difficult is critical. The amount of time spend in sedentary activities, such as watching TV or playing video games, should be limited for all children.

During the colder months, children may be less likely to be physically active and daily schedules may include less time for outside activities. Therefore, careful planning is necessary to ensure that children are active all year.

Are Our Children Physically Fit?

Connie Jo Smith, CCR&R Specialist

Research tells us that at least one child in four in the United States today is seriously overweight, and that number keeps growing. During the last 20 years, the number of overweight children has increased by more than 50%. Also, the number of extremely overweight children has almost doubled. Hardening of the arteries may sound like an adult problem, but by

Physical Fitness Resources Reviews

Lesley Montgomery, Office Coordinator

Following are some books you might find useful to help keep the children you care for in good physical condition! Please don't hesitate to call 800-621-5908 or (270) 745-2216 to check out these books. We will be glad to mail library materials to you. We also welcome drop-in visits to our new resource library location at Room 151 Jones Jagers, on Western's campus.

Arnold's Fitness for Kids – Ages Birth-5, by Arnold Schwarzenegger with Charles Gaines. As a parent and as Chairman of the President's Council on Physical Fitness, Arnold believes that the single most serious fitness problem in the United States is the steady decline in the physical well-being of our young people. To overcome this situation, Arnold offers a fun, comprehensive physical fitness manual that

includes motor skills development, how parents can help children learn and acquire motor skills through games, exercises and play activities, and the roles preschools can play in helping parents and children achieve their goals. The book even presents a sensible program of good nutrition, to make "eating smart" a permanent part of family life. This book is very well illustrated with excellent line drawings, photographs of Arnold with children performing the various exercises and games, and it also provides anecdotes from Arnold's own childhood. Please don't miss out on this informative and interesting book!

Games We Should Play in School, by Frank Aycox. Mr. Aycox analyzes the social forces in early elementary level to junior high school classrooms, describes social play, and

provides over 55 dynamic and fun social games for students to play. These games will help children learn positive social behaviors, become less antagonistic and more cooperative, and will even enhance the learning process. This book with its pen and ink line drawings presents the games in alphabetical order by title, delineates number of players needed for each game, where it can be played, what equipment is needed, and gives full directions and a follow-up teacher's guide. Appropriate for all children, including those receiving therapeutic intervention.

How to Play with Kids, by Jim Therrell, MSP. Mr. Therrell offers a positive, affirming book on play, using his extensive experience in play theory and workshop presentations to integrate such topics as behavioral boundaries, discipline, self-esteem, enrichment techniques, safety, and motivation. More than a simple list of games, the book presents proven techniques, tips and stories to help providers strengthen their relationships with the children. Humor is used as a great motivator, stress reliever and as a bridge to build rapport. Mr. Therrell focuses on evaluating and fostering a child's self-esteem. This is an enriching book you won't want to miss.

Pathways to Play: Developing Play Skills in Young Children, Sandra Heidemann and

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Western Kentucky University
1 Big Red Way, 344 Tate Page Hall
Bowling Green, KY 42101-3576

Deborah Hewitt. This useful, practical and fun book provides play checklists, illustrative photographs and play theory to prove that "play skills are life skills." The authors help teachers and care givers pinpoint the step in cooperative play where a child is having problems. Then, by using the activities that correspond with each checklist item, the care giver can plan activities that encourage the child to develop the needed skills. This is much more than behavior management, though; the book gives specifically targeted teaching strategies and over 100 activity ideas, along with ideas for trainers and an easy-to-understand discussion of the basis of play. Please don't let the "no nonsense" approach prevent you from utilizing this excellent resource!

Events of Interest

Eye Care Month	Oatmeal Month
National Hobby Month	National Soup Month
National Staying Healthy Month	
National Thank-You Month	
January 5th	National Bird Day
January 6th	Bean Day
January 7th	Old Rock Day
January 8th	Elvis Presley's Birthday
January 11th	Milk Day
January 11th	Secret Pal Day
January 13th	Poetry Break Day
January 15th	Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday
January 19th	Hat Day
January 20th	Cheese Day
January 21st	National Hugging Day
January 23rd	Measure Your Feet Day
January 24th	Chinese New Year
January 28th	National Kazoo Day
January 29th	National Puzzle Day
January 31st	Backwards Day
January 31st	Jackie Robinson's Birthday
January 31st	National School Nurse Day

Child Care Resource & Referral

The staff of the Child Care Resource and Referral at Western Kentucky University includes:

Connie Jo Smith, CCR&R Specialist
Sherri Meyer, CCR&R Coordinator
Taylor Tucker, Quality Coordinator
Kim McIntyre, Professional Development Coordinator
Deane Oliva, Family Child Care Coordinator
Amy Hood, Infant & Toddler Consultant
Lesley Montgomery, Office Coordinator
Terri Mills, Office Assistant

For More Information:

Phone us at (270) 745-2216 or (800) 621-5908

Fax us at (270) 745-7089

E-Mail us at ccrexpert@wku.edu

Visit our website at www.ttas.org

