

# THE CHILD CARE PROFESSIONAL

## The Newsletter of the WKU Child Care Resource & Referral

Western Kentucky University

1 Big Red Way

344 Tate Page Hall

Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101-3576

## Dealing with Death: A Child's Perspective

*Sherri Meyer, CCR&R Coordinator*

During some part of your career working with young children, whether as a child care provider or as a parent, you will encounter a child who has lost someone he or she has loved. This may be a pet or a person but regardless, the child has lost someone important. The challenge is knowing how to handle questions and inquiries. Children are naturally curious and do not usually understand the full concept of death. That is not surprising since we as adults have a difficult time understanding as well.

What is very surprising and interesting is just how children can perceive death. Some children will assume that the pet or person will be back. They are not yet at a developmental stage to understand "ending" or the "finishing" of something. Older children will understand that an end has occurred.

Recently, some young children experienced the death of a loved one and the viewing of death through the eyes of two four-year-olds and a six-year-old was enlightening. Based on the information that was received from their parents and their beliefs of what happens after death, the children believed that the loved great-grandparent's "energy" went to heaven. It was reassuring to see the questions that the children inquired about as they spent a few hours with the rest of the family at the funeral home. The children were inquisitive as to "where are her legs?" The family was very relaxed in allowing the children to search and touch and ask questions. This allowed death to not be scary or taboo for them.

It was a family ritual to always say goodbye to loved ones after a visit with a hug and kiss to tie the loved over until the next visit. Even through all of the visits to the hospital when the great-grandmother was sick, hugs and kisses were never forgotten. As it was time to leave the funeral home after visitation, the six year reminded his mother, "But

Mommy, we have to tell Granny goodbye and give her a hug!" What a great thing for the child to know and remember that it was a needed thing so that Granny would always know that she was loved.

One of the four year olds remembered that last spring, his family had buried a baby bird that had fallen from a nearby tree in the backyard. He informed his mother after giving Granny a kiss that "Remember that bird we buried in the yard last year? Well, I bet that he is in heaven, has gotten big now, and was waiting for Granny when she got there so that she wouldn't be alone!" He was so proud of himself, and what a thought for a four-year-old!



It is amazing what children understand and since the family had a positive outlook and attitude with the children, death was not scary for them. Children can add such encouragement and make some situations easier when adults see such experiences through the eyes of children.

We should spend more time experiencing life through the eyes of children. It is important when working with families in such a crisis to find out how they are handling questions from children and how the parents would like you to answer questions that the children raise when with you as the child care provider. We may not always agree with the beliefs that families have but those beliefs belong to the family and we as child care providers can not give our opinion on what we believe as the truth since every family is different.

If you have a family who experiences a loss of a family member or a pet, the Child Care Resource & Referral has many resources that may be beneficial. If you have a family in such a crisis, feel free to call the CCR&R and request these resources.

# Is There a Job Opening?

*Dr. Becky S. Bennett, Western Kentucky University Career Specialist*

The Western Kentucky University (WKU) Career Services Center lists job openings that may be of interest to WKU students and graduates. It is free to the employer to list job openings and many WKU students and graduates turn to the Career Services Center job listing when looking for employment. You can list a job with them several ways.

1. Complete their online form at <http://www.wku.edu/Info/Student/Career.Serv/cscweb/>. Employer information, including job listing is on the right side of their web page.
2. Email the job vacancy to Dan Onitsuka at [Dan.Onitsuka@wku.edu](mailto:Dan.Onitsuka@wku.edu).
3. Fax your vacancy to the attention of Dan Onitsuka at (270) 745-3094.
4. Call in details of your job vacancy to Dan Onitsuka at (270) 745-3095.
5. Mail your vacancy to Dan Onitsuka, Career Services Center, Western Kentucky University, 1 Big Red Way, Bowling Green, KY 42101.

When you list a job vacancy, please provide the following information:

- a job description and information about when the position is available
- information about job qualifications (major(s) requested, experience needed, etc.)
- salary range
- application process information
- company contact person name, address, phone and fax numbers.

Your vacancy will be posted at the Career Services Center and may be listed in the weekly Job Vacancy Bulletin which is available in hard copy and on the Internet at the Career Services Center homepage.

Do you need a place to interview job applicants? The WKU Career Services Center will also provide assistance to employers that would like to conduct interviews with WKU students and graduates. For more information about this service you can see the web page section called, Recruiting at WKU or call their office at 270-745-3094. The contact person for on campus interview arrangements is Tess McKinley. Arrangements generally take six weeks, so plan ahead.

## Child Care Provider Appreciation Day

Just a reminder that Child Care Provider Appreciation Day is May 10. Remember the wonderful individuals who work for you, work with you, and care for the young children in our communities. Remember to say "thank you" for the love and caring that is provided. Celebrate child care providers and what wonderful people they are!

## Did You Know?

The State of Kentucky requires all children born in a hospital to have a newborn hearing screening before leaving the hospital. This was part of the initial KY Kids Now initiatives.

**The average child care provider earns \$16,350 a year.**

## Child Care Resource & Referral

*The staff of the CCR&R at Western Kentucky University includes:*

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

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

# Good Reasons to Give CCR&R Your E-Mail Address

Deane Oliva, CCR&R Family Child Care Coordinator

Using e-mail is a fast, inexpensive way to keep in contact with friends and business associates. It often makes communicating with others more efficient. For example, e-mail cuts down on the costs and frustrating delays that occur when you telephone an agency and try to find the person with whom you need to speak.

For example, at the CCR&R, when you e-mail one staff person and another could better handle the question, the first CCR&R staff member simply forwards the request to the appropriate person. You do not have to make another call or tell the same story again.



When your initial query generates a series of questions for either you or the CCR&R staff, either of you can simply push reply and ask for more information. E-mail also minimizes the time away from the children or other important tasks because you

e-mail at your convenience knowing that, no matter what time you send the e-mail, it will always reach the intended recipient. Similarly, you also check your e-mail when the time best suits you, rather than rushing your responses and thoughts whenever the telephone happens to ring.

It is easy to reach any CCR&R staff member. Our e-mail addresses are simple: first name, period, last name, at sign, wku, period, edu. For example, my e-mail address is [deane.oliva@wku.edu](mailto:deane.oliva@wku.edu).

Why not e-mail the CCR&R Office Coordinator, Lesley Montgomery, today and let her know your e-mail address. Be sure to tell her the center, home, or school that you represent. She will then add your name to our e-mail list so that CCR&R can send you information as it becomes available. Remember, Lesley's e-mail address is [lesley.montgomery@wku.edu](mailto:lesley.montgomery@wku.edu).

## Survival

Connie Jo Smith, CCR&R Specialist

In *The Boss's Survival Guide* (2001) the point is made that the workforce has changed over time and instead of the "Gold-Watch Workers," who stayed with the same company until retirement, we now have the "Swatch Workers," who will move from company to company based upon the best pay, benefits, opportunities, and even the best boss.

In addition to the change in the workforce mind set, there is a shortage of workers because there are fewer people being born and many baby boomers are ready to retire. A look at demographics tells us that this situation is likely to get worse over the next few years. Therefore retention of staff, especially those great ones, is critical. So, how do you keep staff from wanting to move on?

A Lou Harris poll indicated that 40 percent of people who rated their boss "poor" planned to look for a new job. On the other hand, only 11 percent of people who rated their boss "excellent" said that they were going to look for work. A turnover of 11 percent instead of 40 percent would likely make life easier and services for children higher quality. OK, a good boss is not all there is to keeping staff, but it is a good start. *The Boss's Survival Guide* tells us that people want to be trained, to be coached, flexibility, the truth, and to belong. Below are the top 10 things suggested and expanded upon in *The Boss's Survival Guide*.

### Top 10 Things to Do to Keep Your Best People

10. Hone your listening skills.
9. Respect cultural values.
8. Manage to get the best results.
7. Recognize the value of emotional intelligence.
6. Don't underestimate the value of informal recognition.
5. Keep employees in the loop.
4. Vary your leadership style.
3. Manage within the context of your organization's culture.
2. Share your expectations for employee behavior.
1. Walk the talk.

This resource is available for free check out from the CCR&R library. Call Lesley to check it out.

# Computers Part III: What Will They Do for Me?

Deane Oliva, Family Child Care Coordinator

Computer applications come in many sizes and costs, ranging from FREE to thousands of dollars. Luckily, when you buy a computer, you often receive an integrated office suite package such as Works, WordPerfect Office Suite, Lotus SmartSuite, or Microsoft Office. Office suites allow you to complete most common business tasks. However, if you want specialized child care software programs, they are also available, both for large centers and smaller child care homes. Here are some of the ways computer programs can help you and your business:

**Finances:** Many software programs will keep track of your income and expenses, balance your checkbook, compare your actual monies to your estimated budget and print out beautiful reports, charts and graphs, explaining in precise detail, your profits and losses. You can start with a simple spreadsheet or checkbook account and move up to an integrated program that will do everything from keep track of payments to tracking your food program and attendance.

**Marketing:** Word processing and desktop publishing applications have many uses. You can write letters, notes, and bulletin board announcements. You can add color, pictures and drawings with a click of the mouse. You can get more creative and publish your center's handbooks, forms, multi-fold flyers and even note cards to celebrate special occasions.

**Record keeping:** Inventories, child information lists, recipes, activities, collections (art, music, etc.), and addresses are but a few of the many types of information you might want to catalogue. From these databases you can then make mailing labels, form letters, and sorted lists for many uses.



**Schedules and Calendars:** Daily, weekly, monthly and yearly calendars are at your fingertips.

Weekly or monthly food calendars, work schedules and daily activity schedules can be as businesslike or fancy as your creativity allows.

**Learning Programs:** Each month over 200 children's software programs are released. Every age and educational level is represented from toddler through advanced collegiate work. Art, music, readiness and science are well covered preschool areas, each of which can offer youngsters quality learning time when supervised. Encyclopedias, dictionaries and books are plentiful.

**Fun:** Need to relax? Try a drawing or crossword puzzle program. Improve your golf or practice bridge. Solve mysteries or play pinball. Several games are included with Windows and many others are free or very inexpensive.

**Interact with the world:** The internet is a worldwide playground. It will be the topic of our next installment.

## Newborn Hearing Screening Campaign

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), Wal-Mart and Pampers Parenting Institute (PPI) have joined together to promote newborn hearing screenings. An American Academy of Pediatrics study found that one in 650 newborns are born with hearing loss and that in the first few months state mandated hearing screenings can help identify any hearing problems.

Newborn screening tests and timely follow up are the focus of the tool kits sponsored by AAP, Wal-Mart and PPI. Brochures discussing the importance of infant hearing screening, a guide to speaking with your pediatrician, and descriptions of developmental milestones are included in the tool kit. All information will be available to shoppers in more than 2,700 Wal-Mart stores nationwide. This project, "Take Time to Talk" is part of the Babies First campaign which focuses on children's health issues.

For more information concerning "Take Time to Talk" toolkit, go to [www.aap.org/bfc/](http://www.aap.org/bfc/)

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics Press Release (March 13, 2002) [www.aap.org/bfc/bfpress.htm](http://www.aap.org/bfc/bfpress.htm)

# Good Start, Grow Smart: The Bush Administration's Early Childhood Initiative

As reported on the White House web page, this national early childhood initiative of the Bush administration addresses three major areas:

**Strengthening Head Start:** Through the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Administration will develop a new accountability system for Head Start to ensure that every Head Start center assesses standards of learning in early literacy, language, and numeracy skills. HHS will also implement a national training program with the goal of training the nearly 50,000 Head Start teachers in early literacy teaching techniques.

**Partnering with States to Improve Early Childhood Education:** The Administration proposes a stronger Federal-State partnership in the delivery of quality early childhood programs. This new approach will ask States to develop quality criteria for early childhood education, including voluntary guidelines on pre-reading and language skills activities that align with State K-12 standards. To help States meet these criteria, States will have more flexibility with their Federal child care funds.

**Providing Information to Teachers, Caregivers and Parents:** In order to close the gap between the best research and current practices in early childhood education, the Department of Education will establish a range of partnerships as part of a broad public awareness campaign targeted toward parents, early childhood educators, child care providers, and other interested parties. To assist this effort, the Bush Administration supports an unprecedented \$45 million research collaborative between the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the Department of Education to identify effective pre-reading and language curricula and teaching strategies.



For more information, visit the website at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/earlychildhood/earlychildhood.html>

# Be Sure Your Items Are Safe!

*Amy S. Hood, Infant and Toddler Consultant*

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), an independent regulatory agency, regularly provides information to the public regarding safety issues. Their mission is to work to keep families safe by reducing the number of injuries and deaths associated with commercial products.



On April 13, 2002 the CPSC issued a recall on infant swings produced by GRACO prior to November 1997. It has been determined that the restraint system on the older swings consist of a waist belt only and a removable tray which serves as a restraint. If these restraints are not used, or parts are missing, infants can slip down into the seat and strangle or fall. There have been six deaths associated with this swing due to missing or unused restraints, five of these deaths occurred in swings that were second hand. CPSC received 209 reports of incidents regarding this swing, 181 reports indicated infants falling out of the swing. There were nine reported falls that resulted in bone fractures and concussions, and 22 infants were caught at the neck or chest.

If you are using one of these swings, or know a family who has one of these swings, you should contact GRACO to determine if their swing needs the new restraint. GRACO is offering free, new safety restraints to replace the old system. The new system is easy to install and helps ensure that infants are securely fastened into the swing.

For more information on this recall or to review other recalled items, visit the website [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov). The CPSC will provide publications and information free of charge! Please know that if you have a recalled item, you should stop using it and follow the advice given by CPSC!

The GRACO swings that are being recalled are battery-powered or wind-up. They are either the traditional A-frame or the open top design.

*Information gathered for this article from the US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), [www.cpsc.org](http://www.cpsc.org).*

## Shaken Baby Syndrome

A press release on April 17, 2002 stated that head trauma is the most frequent cause of permanent damage or death among abused infants and children, and that Shaken Baby Syndrome accounts for a significant number of those cases. Although this is a serious issue, many people are not aware of the hazards connected with shaking an infant.

Dr. Betty Spivack, a forensic pediatrician with the state medical examiner's office reports that shaking can be devastating and even fatal to an infant. Since a young child's brain is still developing it is soft and bounces back and forth in the skull, which causes swelling and brain damage. Shaking a baby can also cause spinal injuries because the infant's neck muscles are too weak to support the head. The press release also stated that about 25 percent of babies severely injured from having been shaken die in the first week. Almost all the other babies shaken are left with permanent neurological damage. Kentucky plans to host a round of workshops to help spread the word. Look for local workshops on the Shaken Baby Syndrome to be announced soon.

## Stand for Children Day

Stand for Children Day was founded on June 1, 1996 with a large rally for children, the largest in American history. Since that time, communities have celebrated children and made the interests and needs of young children known in their communities. This effort has continued with many community and national supports to help ensure that all children have the opportunity to grow up healthy, safe, and educated. This year's theme is "Invest in Early Education".

Take a moment to celebrate the young children in your community. Find out what events may be taking place or create your own event. Now is a good time to contact your legislator and make them aware of what children need in your community but at the same time to thank them for their support of the KIDS Now initiatives.

For information about Stand for Children Day, you can visit their website at [www.stand.org](http://www.stand.org)



## Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI)

*Connie Jo Smith, CCR&R Specialist*

ACEI a non-profit professional association has been dedicated to the health, education and well being of children, advancement of childhood education, and professional development of their teachers since 1892. ACEI members receive several benefits, including publications and discounts on conference registration fees.

Even for those who are not members, the web page provides legislative updates, position statements, publications for sale, and information about conferences. Position statements include topics such as quality child care, children and war, infancy and early childhood, and testing.

May 6-12, 2001, is designated by the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) as the Week of the Classroom Teacher. This year's theme is "TEACHERS TOUCH TOMORROW—Inspiring The Promise Of The Millennium." In over 90 different countries, states and provinces around the world, teachers will be honored. For more information about ACEI contact them directly at:

### Association for Childhood Education International

17904 Georgia Ave, Suite 215

Olney, MD 20832

Phone: 800.423.3563

Website: [www.acei.org](http://www.acei.org)

### *Interested in Going to College?*

Contact Kim McIntyre at the CCR&R  
to learn about scholarship opportunities

*This issue of THE CHILD CARE PROFESSIONAL  
is brought to you by the letter*

**D.**

*D stands for Dennis Angle, the designer and editor of  
the CCR&R newsletter. Thanks, Dennis, for all your  
hard work behind the scenes!*

## May Celebrations

*American Bike Month*

*Asian Pacific American Heritage Month*

*Asparagus Month*

*Asthma & Allergy Awareness Month*

*Better Hearing and Speech Month*

*Flower Month*

*National Bar-B-Que Month*

*National Egg Month*

*National Duckling Month*

*National Hamburger Month*

*National Mental Health Month*

*National Salad Month*

*National Photo Month*

*National Physical Fitness and Sports Month*

*National Strawberry Month*

*Older Americans Month*

*May 1st - Worthy Wage Day For Day Care Providers*

*May 4th - National Weather Observers' Day*

*May 7th - National Teacher Day*

*May 10th - National Family Child Care Provider's Day*

*May 14th - National Dance Like a Chicken Day*

*May 19th - Circus Day*

*(The Ringling Brother's Circus first opened in 1884)*

*2nd Week of May - National Pet Week*

*3rd Week of May - National Police Week*

*Last Week of May - National Backyard Games Week*

## Looking for Parent Involvement Ideas?

*Connie Jo Smith, CCR&R Specialist*

Although parents are very busy, most really want to be involved in their children's early care and development. Here are a few ideas you can use to work in partnership with the adults who are significant to the children in your care. Please remember to think of "parent" in the broadest sense, because many times it will be an aunt, grandfather, foster parent, or someone else who is responsible for children.

- Create a Parent/Family bulletin board where you can post invitations to training and meetings, newsletters, announcements about policy changes, games to play at home with their child, or the topics being covered with the children.
- Establish a library of handouts, books, and videos about child growth and development that you can check out to parents and family members.
- Ask parents and family members to contribute materials that they might just throw away for classroom activities. Examples might be: toilet paper rolls, milk cartons and jugs, shoe boxes, egg cartons, spice containers, socks, etc.
- Invite parents and family members to visit the classroom and read to children.
- Ask parents to visit the center and talk about their jobs or hobbies, and demonstrate special skills.
- Prepare check out boxes of toys for parents and family members to borrow.



Look for more ideas in future newsletters!

## The High Cost of Smoking

On April 11, 2002 the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) released a new study concerning smoking costs and mortality. The study stated that neonatal expenditures related to smoking were estimated at \$366 million in 1996 or \$704 per maternal smoker. Also, the study reported that smoking during pregnancy causes about 1,000 infant deaths each year.



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