



CCCC E-Newsletter August, 2007 Issue

Greetings from Community Connection for Child Care! Often, the fall months bring new children to our child care group. These children usually go through an adjustment period before they adapt as regular members of the group. Children react differently to separation. Some children may be upset for a day, others for several weeks. One child may cry for only a few minutes; another child may cry all day. What can you do to make this adjustment period smoother for the child, the parents, and you?

HELPING PARENTS. First, tell the parents an adjustment period is normal and expected. Ask them to help by keeping the child's home life as calm as possible during the first few weeks. Encourage them to talk with you daily so you can share news about how the adjustment is going. Talk with parents ahead of time about how to leave. Explain that children will feel better if the parent is understanding but positive about the separation. When it is time to leave, they should do so without hesitating but also without "sneaking" away. Other tips to share with parents are to talk to the child before drop-off, visit child care provider before starting program, create a goodbye ritual, comfort the child and validate his emotions and allow personal items from home and contact with parents.

HELPING CHILDREN. Next, concentrate on getting the child accustomed to the routines of your program. Keep in mind that the daily routine is a wristwatch to a young child. How would you feel if you were taken someplace where there were no clocks, and you had no idea what was going on or when you would go home? The daily routine tells the child what "time" it is and what comes next. Knowing the classroom routine will help the child predict when mom or dad will come back. You can help the child learn your routine by listing what you will do until the child's parents arrive. Go over this list as many times as the child wants. Throughout the day, remind the child what the next activity will be. After a while, start asking the child to tell you what comes next. Try to stay close to your normal routine for at least the first three weeks of a new child's stay. If possible, hold off field trips until the child is more secure. Allow the child to bring a special blanket or pillow for comfort during this transition time. Have a cozy chair in a comfort zone where the child can go and rest with his blanket or pillow when feeling sad. At first, you can go with the child to this place for reassurance, but aim for that to be a place the child can go for comfort.

KCET's A Place of Our Own television program also offers providers ways to ease the tension of transitions, by making a child feel welcome and important. They suggest organizing the entrance of your child care to let children know that they are in a safe environment with, for example, set of tree blocks, Duplos, dinosaurs, zoo or jungle animals and plastic mini trees. This type of free play helps children transition, from the care of their parents, to the care of a provider.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS. There are some times in a child's life that will cause difficult transitions to new settings. For example, between 5 and 11 months many babies go through a period characterized by separation anxiety. At this point in their lives, they are smart enough to recognize someone as a "stranger," and having a stranger near makes them anxious.

Another special case is children who have a new sibling. They are already going through enough changes at home without the worries of changing caregivers. If you realize that a major event is occurring in a child's life, you might suggest that parents postpone a child care change until this period passes. Reprinted with permission from the National Network for Child Care - NNCC. Thiel, C. (1991). Easing Separation Anxiety. In Todd, C.M. (Ed.), *Day care center connections*, 1(1), p. 4. Urbana-Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Service.

Until next time, our best to you and yours --

The staff of Community Connection for Child Care

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^THIS MONTH'S FEATURES^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

CCCC PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Would you like to be a member of Kern AEYC, CAEYC and NAEYC?

Kern Association for the Education of Young Children (Kern AEYC) is offering the opportunity to you to apply for approximately 10 scholarships that will be awarded to members in September, 2007!

Kern AEYC's mission is to provide a professional membership organization committed to promoting quality programs for young children and their families. The goal is to develop a strategy, through mentorship, which will enhance and promote opportunities for all individuals interested in the well-being of children and families to grow professionally, experience leadership roles and network with others within the early childhood community.

Eligibility requirements include:

*Attendance at 1 or more Kern AEYC workshop(s) (August, 2006 - May, 2007)

*Working in a Non California Department of Education subsidized program, Child Development student (or related field), or licensed Family Child Care provider.

Membership benefits include free Kern AEYC workshops, reduced fee AEYC Conferences, Young Children magazine and reduced prices on NAEYC books and materials. If you would like to become a member, please copy and paste the URL below and download an application.
<http://wwwstatic.kern.org/gems/cel/Scholarshipflier.pdf>

Scholarship recipients will be awarded by random drawing. If you are interested, please have your application in by September 7, 2007.

UPCOMING TRAINING

Save the date! The 2007 Kern County Child Development Conference will be held on Saturday, October 20, 2007. This all-day conference for early childhood professionals, child care providers and anyone who works with children will celebrate 10 years of creative learning to promote the growth and development of young children to reach their potential. This year's event is sponsored by Kern First 5 .

The conference will take place from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with registration beginning at 7:00 a.m. at Holiday Inn Select and Rabobank Convention Center, 1001 Truxtun Avenue in Bakersfield. The conference will bring together state and local experts in early childhood development as well as Kern County early childhood educators in three English and Spanish workshop sessions. The conference will have a number of extras you will want to check out that day such as educational information to pick up, a raffle of Lakeshore Learning Materials gift certificates and vendors of books, toys and many other items for sale. Attendees can also receive one-half credit for attending.

This year's keynote speaker is Constant Hine M.A., Educational Trainer, Keynote Speaker, Consultant and Coach who will help us explore how we can and do make a difference - by being ALL of who we are. She will remind us how we are always making a difference with intention and awareness or unintentionally with lack of awareness. She'll help us reflect and become more aware how to make a difference in a way that is a contribution, from our hearts, in love and care for others. It's not always in what we do, but so often in our attitudes and who we are with one another. Let's be the true gem we each are shining from within.

Don't wait! Register today by accessing the English/Spanish 2007 KCCD Program and Registration at <http://wwwstatic.kern.org/gems/cccc/ConferenceProgram.pdf> and <http://wwwstatic.kern.org/gems/cccc/ProgramInsert.pdf>

FEATURED QUESTION

I run a family daycare that offers care six days a week. How can I prevent "burn-out?" - Nancy, Family Child Care Provider

Burn-out is when you find that you are emotionally and psychologically drained from doing a task or job. Usually burn-out occurs after doing this task or job for an extended period of time . It is more than having an isolated "bad day." People in service and caring professions, like teachers and child care providers, are at more risk to burn-out since these professions often require a person to be involved emotionally and psychologically with the people they serve or care for. Also there is a greater likelihood that these professions may take work home with them emotionally and/or physically. For example, a child care provider may find herself after hours wondering how she is going to handle an anticipated conflict with a new family and a preschool teacher may be worrying how she will handle an on-going behavioral problem in the classroom. Moreover, family child care providers, because they work out of their homes, may suffer burn-out due to isolation.

Burn-out can effect you by making you feel overwhelmed, irritable and depressed and see everything in a more negative light. You may also feel as though you have lost your sense of purpose or motivation and have difficulty concentrating and/or making decisions. You may be at risk if you identify with many of these statements:

- I have a hard time asking others for help.
- I tend to strive for perfection and have very high expectations for myself .
- I have difficulty saying no to additional requests for my time.
- If only I would work harder, I would be successful.
- I should be able to do what others cannot.
- My work life comes first.
- I am a giver, not a taker.

There are some very specific things you can do to prevent or cope with feelings of burn-out:

- Seek out the support of others in similar situations. Join a professional organization support group or child care association like Kern Association for the Education of Young Children (Kern AEYC) (see information above).
- Work on setting limits and learn how to say no.
- Step back and re-evaluate your goals and priorities.
- Cut back on any tasks or responsibilities that are of lower priority.
- Recognize and accept your limitations.
- Take care of yourself. Be sure to eat right, exercise and get plenty of rest.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help. Learn how to delegate.
- Schedule time for yourself. Seek out diverse hobbies or past times.
- Engage in stress relieving activities or relaxation exercises.

Source: Throwing in the Towel: Are You Experiencing Burn-Out?, Joni Levine, 2004
<http://www.childcarelounge.com/articles/burnout.htm>

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^CHECK THIS OUT^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

KIDS IN THE KITCHEN

Oven-Cooked Zucchini Sticks

- 1/2 cup Italian bread crumbs
- 2 tbsp. freshly grated or canned parmesan cheese
- 1/4 tsp. garlic powder
- 3 medium zucchini
- 1/2 cup water or milk

1 cup fat-free or low-fat spaghetti sauce or ranch dressing

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees F. Spray a cookie sheet with cooking spray.
2. Place bread crumbs, cheese, and garlic powder in a zip lock bag; shake well to combine. Set aside.
3. Cut each zucchini lengthwise into 8 pieces; cut each piece in half horizontally.
4. Fill a saucer with water or milk. Dip each zucchini stick in water or milk and drop into the bag of crumb mixture. Shake until coated on all sides and place on the coated cookie sheet. Repeat with rest of sticks.
5. Bake for 10-15 minutes or until brown and tender.

6. Serve with warm spaghetti sauce or ranch dressing.

Source: Day Care & Child Development Council of Tompkins County, Inc. July/August 2007. For more recipe ideas, check out our Get Ready, Get Set, Get Fit 4 Life website at [http://www.everydaylearning.net/stories/storyReader\\$95](http://www.everydaylearning.net/stories/storyReader$95)

MOVIN' & GROOVIN'

Parachute-Turtle Game

This activity helps children to gain an understanding of why a turtle goes inside its shell and also allows children to practice responding to directions. This activity requires a large parachute with at least 10-12 handles. A large bed sheet is also okay with smaller groups. Start the activity by having all the children sit with one of the parachute handles in their hands. Build up the activity by asking, "What does a turtle have on its back (shell)?" and "Why does a turtle hide in its shell?" After discussing this, have the students pull the parachute so only their heads are sticking out. Then, build a further image for the children. Use a visual description like, "the turtle is in the woods and sees a bear." "What should you do?" Most of them will say "hide in the shell," the parachute.

Use the word "Boo" as the "GO" command to let students know that they have been frightened as little turtles and need to get in the shell. The students then meet the teacher under the parachute to briefly discuss why they're inside the shell. Repeat. (Probably not more than three-five times in a row.) During closure, talk with students about what kind of animal they were for the day and ask, "what does a turtle do when it is afraid." Source: PE Central (<http://www.pecentral.org>).

For more fun physical activity ideas, visit our Get Ready, Get Set, Get Fit 4 Life website at [http://kcsos.kern.org/everydaylearning/stories/storyReader\\$40](http://kcsos.kern.org/everydaylearning/stories/storyReader$40)

INCLUDING ALL CHILDREN

Dyslexia is a language-based disability that affects both oral and written language. With help, children with dyslexia can become successful readers. The following may be associated with dyslexia for preschool and elementary school children if they are unexpected for the individual's age, educational level, or cognitive abilities.

- May talk later than most children
- May have difficulty pronouncing words, i.e., busgetti for spaghetti, mawn lower for lawn mower
- May be slow to add new vocabulary words
- May be unable to recall the right word
- May have difficulty with rhyming
- May have trouble learning the alphabet, numbers, days of the week, colors, shapes, how to spell and write his or her name
- May have trouble interacting with peers
- May be unable to follow multi-step directions or routines
- Fine motor skills may develop more slowly than in other children
- May have difficulty telling and/or retelling a story in the correct sequence
- Often has difficulty separating sounds in words and blending sounds to make words

To verify that an individual is dyslexic, he/she should be tested by a qualified testing examiner.

Source: Reading Rockets. For more activities and resources for working with children with special needs check out the 2007 Literacy Calendar at <http://www.everydaylearning.net/literacycalendar>

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Developing Strong Fine-Motor Skills

Children's hands must be strong enough to master coloring, cutting, pasting, and holding a pencil - fine-motor tasks that kids use every day in kindergarten. Working on dexterity and strength in hands and fingers first can eliminate the development of an inappropriate pencil grasp. The following activities

develop strength and dexterity in young hands and fingers that will help build the strength and dexterity necessary to hold a pencil appropriately:

--Offer writing utensils in a variety of sizes and shapes. Many may believe that large pencils are easier to hold, but that's not always true. For a child with weak hands, a smaller, shorter pencil might be easier to manage.

--Mist houseplants with a spray bottle, an activity that boosts both writing and scissor skills

--Scribble in clay with fingers is a fun alternative to doing it on paper and especially helpful for kids who are resistant to writing and drawing

--Give child a pipe cleaner and some Cheerios (or similar, colorful cereal) to make bracelets

Source: Scholastic.Com

WORKING WITH SCHOOL AGE

Most children look forward to getting out of school for the summer, but not every child is as eager to go back to school in the fall. In fact, for some children this can be a stressful time. If your children are reluctant, or even frightened, about returning to the classroom, let them know it is okay to have these feelings about starting school. To put a positive spin on all these exciting, though admittedly unsettling, changes, share with them how children in Central America deal with their fears. In Central America, children make tiny "Worry Dolls," from wood and yarn. The children tell these dolls their worries and, before they go to bed, the children put the dolls under the pillows. The dolls take away all of the children's worries and let them have a restful night of sleep. Try this activity before school starts and see what happens!

Whimsical Worry Doll

Materials Needed: 1 craft stick, Piece of drinking straw, Fine-tip washable markers, Various colors of yarn, Tape and Glue

Cut straws into 3-inch pieces. You will need one piece. Tape the piece of straw to the craft stick. Use markers to draw eyes and a mouth. Wrap the doll's arms with various colors of yarn for clothing. Tuck in the loose ends. Wrap the doll's body with various colors of yarn for clothing. Tuck in the loose ends. Glue a small piece of yarn onto the head for hair.

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

Marketing Tips

- Continually promote your program, even when you have no anticipated openings
- List benefits of your program, indicating how your program can make a positive difference to a parent and child (example: child-centered curriculum), pick your top three benefits to share with prospective clients
- Ask parents and children what they like best and consider for your top three
- Ask previous and current parents to write a letter of reference for your portfolio
- Have an exit interview with parents to get another perspective of what's working & what may need to be re-evaluated/improved
- Potential client's impression of your home will be some of your best advertising
- Create a positive, professional impression for your recorded phone message, identify yourself and your business
- Do follow -up calls of potential parents
- Maintain a phone log of all clients with contact information and how they heard about your child care program
- Welcome Mat: WELCOME Mrs. Jones' CHILDCARE
- Volunteer for a fundraiser that puts you in contact with parents
- Incentive Coupons: (example: \$25 off third week of care for your infant)
- Raffle off a gift or offer discounts to parents who bring in referrals

Source: Office of Children's Services, Howard County Maryland Government