



## CCCC E-Newsletter May, 2006 Issue

Greetings from Community Connection for Child Care! Father's Day is June 18 this year. Father's Day is a natural opportunity for you to reconnect or connect with the fathers in your program who are an important element in a child's positive development. Fathers play a large role in nurturing their children and can build creativity, character, the ability to make friends and get along with others.

Unfortunately, an estimated 39 percent of all US children - now live apart from their father and many fathers lack workplaces that are family-friendly and supportive to the needs of working parents. However, there are some easy ways for you to involve your fathers in your program. Every child care provider can examine how inviting their program environment is for fathers. Look at your enrollment forms and parent notices to be sure you are as welcoming to fathers as you are to mothers. Have photos or drawings of men on your bulletin board and on the walls. If you have a place for parents to drop in and browse, add a few items that fathers may head for. If your program doesn't have many fathers involved, your efforts will send a message as to what you would like to achieve in the future.

Reach out to fathers to let them know ways they can be involved in your program. Some may have special skills or hobbies to share. Others may feel more comfortable reading a book to their child before leaving for work in the morning. Offer a variety of opportunities for involvement that allow all parents who work full time to participate. Here are some strategies from Child Care Aware (<http://www.childcareaware.org>) that you can build on to increase fathers' involvement in your child care program:

- Find out what fathers want to do to be involved: it may or may not be the same as your ideas
- Have dads call other dads to encourage involvement
- Have dads come to a "Dads-come-to lunch"
- Be sure to have fathers' names on all your lists and flyers
- Have dads come to your program to teach the kids about their favorite sport or cook a favorite meal
- Examine your practices, materials and environment to ensure they are father-friendly
- Offer training to your staff on how to effectively work with fathers
- Be persistent. You may have to try several ideas before you find what works best for your program and your families
- Make parent involvement a core value of your program

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

The staff of Community Connection for Child Care

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

### \*CCCC PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT\*

#### CCCC Resource Library

Community Connection for Child Care has a Resource Library designed to make your job as a child care provider and early childhood educator a little easier. The Resource Library offers a library, curriculum ideas, training videos, laminating service, binding machine, copy machine and the Ellison machine. Each of these tools can help you add pizzazz to your reading, creative projects and interactive programs. We encourage you to take advantage of this wonderful center-as a resource in helping you be the best you can be! Don't forget that child care center staff as well as family child care home providers are welcome to check out toys. Parents are also encouraged to visit our Resource Library to check out books on parenting, potty training and child nutrition. Parents are also welcomed to use equipment to make homemade books for the children, materials for scrapbooking and party decorations.

Remember our lending library when looking for outdoor equipment and toys to keep children of all ages busying all summer. Please also check out our extensive toy collection specifically for children with special needs! Visit [http://kcsos.kern.org/cccc/stories/storyReader\\$1128](http://kcsos.kern.org/cccc/stories/storyReader$1128) to see our list of toys and equipment that is available for check out.

Please note the following schedule change on your calendar. Beginning June 1, the Resource Library will only offer evening hours the third Thursday of each month and will be open those evenings until 7 p.m. For more information, check out <http://kcsos.kern.org/cccc/resourcelibrary>

### \*UPCOMING TRAINING\*

#### Play Day in the Park

(June - September, 2006) *English/Spanish*

Bring the children and get some great ideas for a fun filled summer! Community Connection staff will be out at parks across the County to help share creative low and no-cost activities ideas to use with children. A variety of children's activities will be set up for EVERYONE to explore. These activities are made out of everyday household items and are designed to help children learn through the use of their senses, motor skills, social skills and language. Children, all providers and parents are invited to join us for a fun filled morning! Be sure to call and let us know that you're coming. To register, please call 661.861.5330.

#### Dates & Places

June 30 Mojave, East Park, July 28 Taft, Franklin Park, August 25 Lamont, Lamont Park, September 29 Bakersfield, Siemon Park

### \*FEATURED QUESTION\*

"The year is coming to a close. Do you have any tips on ending the year to help bring closure for the children and families in my program who are leaving for Kindergarten?" Elena, Preschool Teacher Aide

**Wind down slowly.** Give children time to tie up individual and group projects. This helps them to prepare emotionally for the end-of-the-year transition.

**Clean up the lost-and-found box.** Display items in clever ways: on a clothesline or on dolls and teddy bears so families will notice and take accumulated items home.

**Create a story quilt.** Divide a large sheet of mural paper into squares. Encourage each child to design a square, depicting a favorite school experience. This parting gift to the school is also a welcoming wall hanging for returning children.

**Make a memory box.** Gather photos of classroom activities or items from field trips and put them in a special box. Share the box with children so they can recall these experiences.

**Have a video viewing.** Invite families to enjoy video clips that highlight children's projects and individual accomplishments. No video? No Problem! Glue photos on poster board.

**Exchange good-bye messages.** Provide materials at the writing and art centers that children can use to make cards for friends or to create memory bracelets.

**Say farewell to families.** Invite families to a picnic or potluck dinner to share festive good-byes. Make sure everyone has something to take home, such as a paint, project, or story by their child.

**Plan a preview.** To ease transitions, older preschoolers might visit their new room at the center/preschool. Children moving on to kindergarten can take a trip to meet the next teacher, see the cafeteria or sit on the big, yellow school bus.

**\*MONTHLY PLANNER FOR APRIL\***

\*June is Home Safety Month. Download our Home Safety Calendar to make your home or family child care home a safer place every day in June! <http://wwwstatic.kern.org/gems/cccc/homesafetycalendar2006.pdf>

\*June 1 is Stand for Children Day. Each year thousands of communities celebrate Stand For Children Day by organizing local events on or around June 1. For information on how you can get involved, contact the Stand For Children National Office at 1-800-663-4032 or go to <http://www.stand.org/>

\*June 14 is Flag Day. Songs, activities and more at <http://www.childfun.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=16>

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

**\*KIDS IN THE KITCHEN\***

Rainbow Pizza

3 English muffins, split (6 halves)

½ cup Pizza or pasta sauce

Pizza toppings (choose any 3):

Grated carrots

Sliced mushrooms

Chopped broccoli

Pineapple chunks

Chopped green or red pepper

Sliced zucchini

½ cup Mozzarella cheese, grated

Spread about one tablespoon sauce on each muffin half. Arrange your favorite toppings on the "crust" in a single layer. Use at least three colors. Sprinkle one tablespoon cheese on each pizza. Place pizzas on a baking sheet and bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes, or until cheese is melted. 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'\***

Catch the Alphabet

Find a soft ball and make sure that there is sufficient area for the ball to be thrown without breaking anything.

Step 1 - Make sure that the student is paying attention and throw the ball to him/her and have them say A.

Step 2 - As the students catch the ball, they must say the next letter of the alphabet. Continue this pattern until the entire alphabet has been gone through. If they make it through the alphabet quickly, add the rule that if the ball is dropped then they must also start over. 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\***

Tips for Helping Parents of Children with Special Needs

- Ask questions about how the child behaves and performs at home-- try to arrange at least one substantive home visit.
- Don't be afraid to call frequently to keep parents up to date on the child's progress and/or problems.
- Work closely with parents to help them implement the child's program as much as they can at home.
- If they want it, share as much information as possible with the parents about the child's disability.
- Listen carefully to what the parent feels are the child's strengths, limitations, and needs.

For more activities and resources for working with children with special needs check out the 2006 Literacy Calendar at

<http://www.everydaylearning.net/literacycalendar>

**\*SCHOOL READINESS\***

Getting children ready for school is about a lot more than making sure he or she know their A, B, C's (even though that is important too). It is also important to make sure children are emotionally and socially ready. Taking turns can help children practice sharing and practice waiting.

When using tricycles or other riding toys, ask your children what taking turns means? Why do we sometimes have to take turns? How can we decide when someone else gets a turn? Can each child think of something to do to make waiting for a turn easier? Write these ideas down on a large piece of paper to display in class for children to refer to when a "dispute" occurs.

**\*BUSINESS RESOURCES FROM REDLEAF NATIONAL INSTITUTE\***

<http://www.redleafinstitute.org>

Using Your Contract Effectively

<http://www.redleafinstitute.org/index.cfm?page=elibrary&category=newslink#article1>

**\*FEATURED QUOTE\***

"Joy is a tiny hand closed around an index finger." - Maya Angelou