



March-April 2006



Tri-Valley Preschool Fair

The Tri-Valley Preschool Fair was started six years ago by Laura Molnar and other concerned parents who were looking for a “one-stop shop” in searching for the preschool for their children. In January 2006, Child Care Links took over planning and hosting of The Tri-Valley Preschool Fair. Despite limited time to plan the event, nearly 300 families and thirty one preschools from the cities of Dublin, Pleasanton, Livermore, Sunol, Danville and San Ramon participated. In addition, four mother’s clubs were represented, My Child’s ID, and East Bay Preschool Directory. Camp Galileo, a program of Tech Museum of Innovation, provided children’s activities. Child Care Links would like to thank all parents and families for attending and contributing to this successful event!



Special thanks to all the volunteers for their time and efforts: Laura Molnar, Kendal Aguilar-Erdei, Nicole Sison, Christy Asbury and Danielle Wyckoff, Julie Camberg, Sara Gonzalez

Participating schools and organizations: ABC Preschool, Beth Emek Preschool, Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS), Carden West Preschool, Danville Montessori School, The Amador Mother's Club, Gingerbread Preschool, Hacienda Child Development Center, Happy Talkers School of Imagination, Holy Cross Lutheran School, Livermore Moms Club, Joy Preschool/Daycare, Kidango Arroyo Vista Center, KinderKirk Christian Preschool, Pleasanton Mothers Club, Little Rascals Learning Center, Mina's Kinder Academy, Montessori School of San Ramon, Our Savior Lutheran Early Childhood Development Center,

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Alameda County Celebrates the Week of the Young Child!

Parents and child care providers are invited to participate in festivities throughout the county between April 1 and April 8, 2006 in honor of the **Week of the Young Child**. This is an annual national celebration to raise awareness about early childhood education and issues.

Following is a list of events. Please mark your calendars. More information will be available closer to the week.

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Child Care Links

Child Care Links currently serves participants out of three offices located in Alameda County: Pleasanton, Fremont and Oakland. We are a Resource & Referral agency and an Alternative Payment/Cal WORKs Program, providing resources to the community by offering the following services:

- Subsidized Child Care Services
- Referrals to Licensed Child Care
- Family Education and Support Services
- Training and Support for Child Care Providers
- Child Care Health and Nutrition Program
- Inclusion Project
- Family Read Night

Child Care Links News is a bi-monthly publication.

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We welcome letters and articles but cannot be responsible for returning unsolicited material.

Week of the Young Child!

Impact of Governor's Budget Proposals for Reducing License Exempt Ceiling Rates

The Governor's Budget proposes significant reductions to the rates currently paid for license-exempt child care. In response to many inquiries about the impact of these rates, the Network has prepared the following summary charts for each county which illustrate:

- 90% of FCCH 85th Percentile Ceiling. The current license-exempt monthly ceiling for full-time infant, preschool, and school age care.
- 60% of FCCH 85th Percentile Ceiling. The proposed reduction for license-exempt providers if they have obtained health and safety training.
- 55% of FCCH 85th Percentile Ceiling. The proposed reduction for license-exempt providers if they have not obtained training within 90 days.

Have an opinion about these budget proposals? Parents can join www.parentvoices.org to make your voice heard! Parents and providers can visit www.childcarelinks.org and click on the link to contact your legislator.

From the Alameda County Office of Education

If we want all of our children to reach their full potential, early care and preschool offer a potent strategy. There is a growing focus on providing preschool for 4-year-olds as a way to help them make a seamless transition into kindergarten and set them on their path to life-long learning.

In Alameda County, we are currently planning a comprehensive approach that addresses early care and preschool for children age birth to 5 years old in order to provide a continuum of learning.

The Alameda County Office of Education has begun collaborating with existing preschool providers, both public and private, and other stakeholders to develop a plan that leverages and coordinates resources so that we are working together to ensure the best possible support for children and parents during these critical first years.

Saturday, April 1	Our Focus the Child Conference (Chabot College-registration required)
Sunday, April 2	Family Day
Monday, April 3	Child Care Center & Family Child Care Home Day
Tuesday, April 4	Children's Health Day
Wednesday, April 5	Children's Literacy Day
Thursday, April 6	Music and Movement Day
Friday, April 7	Provider Appreciation Day
Saturday, April 8	Park Day

Remember to mark your calendar for the **Our Focus the Child Conference 2006!** on Saturday April 1, 2006 from 8-5 pm. The conference will be held at Chabot College 25555 Hesperian Blvd. Hayward, CA, 94545. This conference is sponsored by Chabot College, Las Positas College and Every Child Counts, First 5 Alameda County. For conference information contact Valerie Ball at 925-424-1170. College credit is available (1/2 unit).

Other great opportunities you won't want to miss include:

March 14, 2006 Harms/Clifford Rating Scales Training for Center Providers at Child Care Links 6-9 pm. Registration required. Please contact Kelly Van Raden, Career Advocate at (925) 249-3920.

March 21, 2006 Information Night for Family Child Care Providers Regarding Working With Parents Around School Readiness/Transition to Kindergarten at Child Care Links from 6 – 8 pm. Registration required. Please contact Kelly Van Raden at (925) 249-3920.

April 7, 2006 Provider Appreciation Day! Please remember to appreciate your child care provider on this date!! Everyone loves to be recognized and appreciated. This is the day to do it. Some simple suggestions to try with your child are help your child write a thank you note, draw a picture or pick a flower to give to their child care provider. The simplest gesture can brighten a child care provider's day. Spread the word and make a difference on Provider Appreciation Day!

Fair...continued from front page

Resurrection Lutheran Preschool, Seed2Sprout Learning Center, Sonshine Enrichment Center, St. Clare's Christian Preschool, Stepping Stones Learning Center, Sunol Glen School- Eagle's Nest Child Care & Preschool, Teddy Bears Children Center, Inc., The Child Day Schools, LLC, The Quarry Lane School, Valley Montessori School, CAPE, Inc. (Community Association for Preschool Education), Fountainhead Montessori, John Knox Co-op Preschool, KinderKirk Nursery School, My Child's ID, East Bay Preschool Directory, Camp Galileo.

The 6th Annual Tri-Valley Preschool Directory is available in PDF format on Child Care Links' website: www.childcarelinks.org

SAVE THE DATE:

7th Annual Tri-Valley Preschool Fair- Saturday, February 3rd, 2007

Recipes for Fun

Mini Veggie Pizzas

Ingredients:

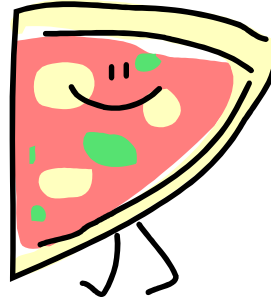
- 1 medium zucchini, chopped
- Whole wheat pitas (6 1/2 inch)
- 1/4 cup chunky garden style pasta sauce
- 1/4 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1/4 cup part-skim ricotta cheese
- 1/3 cup shredded reduced-fat mozzarella cheese
- 1 cup chopped plum tomatoes

Directions:

Pre- heat oven to 425 degrees. To a non stick skillet add zucchini and peppers. Sauté over medium heat 10

minutes or until vegetables are softened. While vegetables are cooking, place pitas on un-greased baking sheet. Bake 5 minutes or until crisp. Add sauce to skillet and mix well. Spread sauce over pitas. Dot with ricotta cheese. Sprinkle with mozzarella cheese and tomatoes.

Bake 7 to 10 minutes or until cheese is melted.



The Health and Nutrition Program

To learn more about the Child Care Links Health & Nutrition Program, please visit www.childcarelinks.org

If you are interested in joining, please contact a case manager.

Kim Judge (925) 249-3941 OR
Mattie Henderson (510) 302-1385 –or–
(925) 249-3942

Preventing Childhood Obesity

By Sally Maier, MS, RD, CDE
Registered Dietitian

Childhood obesity is an epidemic here in California. One out of every five children is overweight. Obese children are developing type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, sleep disorders, and other chronic health problems that used to occur only in adults.

There is a lot parents and caregivers can do to help prevent obesity in children. We are the role models of eating and exercise in our children's lives. They look up to us and imitate our behaviors. If we eat a healthy variety of foods at home, our children will learn to eat healthy foods. If we take the time to actively play with our children, they will experience the enjoyment of moving their bodies regularly. If we limit the time spent watching TV in our households, our children can only benefit from missing the many unhealthy foods, activities, and negative messages promoted on TV.

I encourage you to rethink the foods you serve your children most commonly. A recent national study found one-third of toddlers eat no fruit and one-quarter of toddlers eat no vegetable on any given day. French fries were the

most commonly eaten vegetable. The foods most frequently eaten by young children besides milk were sweetened beverages, juice, cheese, bread, butter, poultry, cereal, cookies, hot dogs, and cold cuts. Where are the fruits, vegetables, beans, fish, and lean meat? Children 2 years of age and older benefit from eating mostly fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat and non-fat dairy products, beans, fish, poultry, and lean meat.

Continue to serve a healthy food even if your children won't eat it the first few times. Introduce new foods in a persistent and positive way at least 8 to 10 times. Children naturally prefer sweet, salty, and high fat foods and need time to become used to other flavors. It also helps to serve small portions and encourage your children to stop eating when full (not when their plate is clean)! Avoid using food as a reward. And be sure to do fun physical activities with your kids.



Tip of the month:
Model healthy eating and exercise habits for your children to help prevent childhood obesity.

California Child Care Portfolio Released

The California Child Care Resource & Referral Network released the 2005 Child Care Portfolio which is a compilation of data from resource & referral agencies statewide. The portfolio provides an overall statewide look, as well as, a county-by-county report on child care supply, demand and costs in relation to statewide and local demographic information. The Child Care Portfolio provides unique data that is not available anywhere else. It is the most comprehensive, up-to-date information that exists about child care supply and demand in California and in this county. The 2005 Child Care Portfolio indicates that finding licensed child care is a challenge in many counties especially for infants. In Alameda County, specifically, child care slots are available for only thirty four percent of children with parents in the labor force, with only 6% slots available for infants at licensed child care facilities. The document also indicates that for a majority of working families, licensed child care is not affordable. In Alameda County, the median rent for a 2-bedroom apartment and the cost of child care for a preschooler in a licensed center is greater than the annual income of a fam-

ily with one minimum wage worker. This forces many families to move out of high-cost, metropolitan counties into more rural and affordable counties. Since 1990, more workers are dealing with long commutes and jobs that require non-traditional hours such as evenings and overnight shifts, and providers are feeling the pressure to extend already long days at their child care homes and centers. However, in Alameda County, only one percent of child care centers and thirty-one percent of family child care homes provide care during non-traditional hours. So what does this mean for Alameda County and the State of California? Patty Siegel, Executive Director of the California Child Care Resource & Referral Network states "While the 2005 Child Care Portfolio demonstrates positive signs, we still have a long way to go toward meeting the diverse needs of California's working families..."

For a more in-depth look at the 2005 Child Care Portfolio, visit www.childcarelinks.org.

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