



May-June 2006



# Child Care Links News

## **National Child Care Provider Recognition Day is Friday, May 12, 2006!**

Childcare organizations nationwide have joined together to declare Friday, May 12, 2006 to be Provider Appreciation Day. National efforts are underway to ask child care organizations, public officials and parents to honor their child care providers for their hard work and dedication to our children. Events such as luncheons, parades, dedications and other celebrations are planned.

It is estimated that of the 21 million children under age 6 in America, 13 million are in child care at least part time. An additional 24 million school-age children are in some form of child care outside of school time. In Alameda County, there are about 156,675 children under 13 with parents in the workforce, yet only 53,859 licensed child care slots exist to serve those children. Licensed child care is only available to about 34% of children with parents in the labor force.

By calling attention to the importance of high quality childcare services for all children and families, these groups hope to improve the quality and availability of such services. In recent years, local governments across the country have joined many governors in proclaiming this day of recognition. Many newspapers and publications have recognized the event. The celebrations in future years promise to carry on and strengthen this national event.

We are encouraging parents with children in childcare to take this day to show their child care provider how much they appreciate them. It takes a special person to work in this field and these individuals are often unrecognized and under-appreciated.

### **What's Happening Locally**

**East County:** The Tri-Valley ECE Collaborative, a joint effort between Child Care Links, Directors of the Valley (DOV) and the Valley Family Child Care Association will celebrate with a Provider Recognition Event on May 16, 2006. Every Child Counts/First 5 Alameda County and the City of Pleasanton are sponsoring the event which will be held at the Pleasanton Senior Center located at 5353 Sunol Blvd. For more information, please contact Becky Hopkins at (925) 931-3432.

**South County:** Association of Professional Child Care Educators (APCCE) presents the 6th Annual Provider Appreciation Dinner on May 12th at Spin-a-Yarn Restaurant in Fremont. For more information, contact Mary Ann Alam (510) 683-8926 or visit [www.apcce.org](http://www.apcce.org)

### **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
- Inclusion Project
- Family Read Night

**Child Care Links News is a bi-monthly publication.**

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**Celebrating 30 Years of Service to the Community**

## Early Care and Education for All Planning in Alameda County

### Did You Know?

The California Association for Family Child Care (CAFCC) Group Medical Plan has extended its open enrollment period!

**Fact:** California is the only State that has a Group Medical Benefits Plan for Family Child Care Providers. Low Cost Medical, Dental, Vision, Disability, Life Insurance

No Exclusions for Pre-Existing Conditions—All Enrollees Accepted— for information call Vantage Business Support Services— proud sponsors of the CAFCC Benefits Plan at 1-877-886-8277 (Hablamos Espanol)  
[www.cafcc.vantagebss.com](http://www.cafcc.vantagebss.com)

### Attention Exempt Providers!

Child Care Links Exempt Provider Training and Outreach Project, Community Links, will be providing monthly orientation at the North County office in Oakland and East County office in Pleasanton. Quarterly orientations will be held at the Family Resource Center in Fremont. If you are a grandparent, relative, friend, neighbor, babysitter or nanny and care for a child and are not licensed, please contact Child Care Links at (925) 417-8733 to participate in the Community Links program. Incentives are provided to those who participate!

To learn more about the activities, timeline and goals of Early Care and Education for All, and how you can participate— please call (510) 875-2470. Additional information and a schedule of public meetings is available online at [www.acgov.org/childcare](http://www.acgov.org/childcare) or [www.acoe.org](http://www.acoe.org)

Alameda County is integrating Pre-school for All (PFA) planning into a comprehensive approach that addresses Early Care and Education for All (infants to five years of age). The inclusive process will build on the work of many experts, including community and business stakeholders, early childhood practitioners, and K-12 professionals.

### Early Care and Education For All: Purpose, Committee Structure and Public Participation

#### Specific goals of the ECE For All Planning Process will:

- Develop a vision and goals for Quality Early Care and Education for all children in Alameda County, infants to five years of age
- Develop a county-wide consensus on the vision and goals
- Develop a proposed implementation timeline and activities plan to work toward those goals and vision

#### Scope of Work & Timeline:

First 5 Alameda County has contracted with a team of experts, headed by Design, Community, and Environments, to conduct the following scope of work, January - November, 2006:

- Comprehensive research, data collection and analyses, including identification of policy and systems changes that assist in better delivery of resources and services
- Development and management of Content Committees and Key Informant Interviews
- Development and monitoring of input sessions, focus groups, and interviews
- Organization of reports
- Final plan development

#### Committees:

ECE For All includes a Steering Committee and three Content Committees to assist in the planning process. The Steering Committee is led by four partners: County Superintendent of Schools Sheila Jordan, the Child Care Planning Council, Assemblywoman Wilma Chan, and First 5 Alameda County. Committee members were selected to represent key organizations or constituencies. Members must exhibit a strong commitment to high quality ECE for all children, infants to five years of age and their families, and to the constituencies or groups they represent.

In order to ensure effectiveness of the process, the Content Committee members will:

- Attend all meetings as requested (no more than six times throughout the year)
- Read materials provided before the meetings, including reports and recommendations of the planning team
- Provide thoughtful and constructive feedback to staff and consultants
- Act as a liaison or ambassador to the community/constituency represented, which may include briefings, presentations, or assistance with coordination of outreach and input

#### Public Input and Participation:

For a successful process, ECE For All requires a strong public presence. Members of the community, professionals, and interested individuals are encouraged to attend meetings, contact committee members and staff, and stay in contact with the process throughout the year. All committee meetings are open to the public and will be posted on the Every Child Counts website.

## Recipes for Fun

### Healthy Snack Time

**Mini pizzas**-spread spaghetti sauce on English muffin half. Top with low fat or fat-free mozzarella cheese. Place under broiler or in a toaster oven until cheese melts.

**Baked apples**-core apples. Pour orange juice over apples and bake until soft.

**Roll-up veggie sandwiches**-place vegetables in a whole wheat tortilla and roll up.

**Frozen bananas**-slice bananas. Roll in crushed cereal, cinnamon and a little sugar. Freeze on wax paper.

**Pretzels, cereals, raisins**-mix together for a "new" trail mix.

**Please note:** Mattie Henderson is no longer at the Pleasanton office. Please call Kim Judge (925) 249-3941, with any questions you may have, or if you need assistance with paperwork.

**Popcorn**-air popped, or pop in a small amount of oil.

**Quesadillas**-melt grated low fat or fat free cheese on a corn tortilla. Add spices or salsa.

**Fruit drinks**-blend together ½ cup fat-free milk, 2 ice cubes, and pieces of fresh fruit juice.

**Low fat crackers**-rice cakes, graham crackers, breadsticks, matzoh, rye krisp, or Wasa.

**Raw vegetables** with dips. For dip, blend fat free/low fat cottage cheese or plain yogurt with spices. Keep cut-up veggies available in the refrigerator.

**Tijuana triangles**-cut corn tortillas into 8 triangles. Place on baking sheet in 425 degrees oven, or on plate in microwave, until crisp and dry. Dip into salsa.

### The Health and Nutrition Program

*The Health and Nutrition Department has enjoyed working with all of the providers who participated in the Child Care Food Program. Child Care Links will be discontinuing this program on June 30, 2006. Due to increased regulations and requirements, limited funding and increased workload for staff, the Child Care Links Board of Directors has decided it is in the best interest of the agency to discontinue the sponsorship of the Child Care Food Program. Child Care Links will continue to offer nutrition articles for the newsletter as well as trainings and workshops for providers. The agency is continuously committed to making sure children and families are receiving information about the importance of good nutrition.*

*Current providers can still claim through the end of June 2006. Please make sure you contact another sponsor from the list of sponsors provided by the state prior to June 30, 2006. If you have further questions, please contact Kim Judge.*

## Make Physical Activity Fun!

By Sally Maier, MS, RD, CDE  
Registered Dietitian

Our bodies are built to move. Young children love to move their bodies while playing. Unfortunately their interest in moving may be lost as they grow up if they are not actively encouraged to have fun moving. Regular physical activity promotes a healthier mind and body. Sixty minutes a day is recommended for healthy children and teens.

Kids need to develop positive feelings about physical activity early in their lives. They will grow up thinking physical activity isn't important if their parents and caregivers are too busy for physical activity. Your children are much more likely to do daily physical activity if you do physical activity with them and keep it fun.

Here are some ideas for physical activities that emphasize fun and enjoyment rather than winning and losing. Go for

long walks with your children, beginning when they are young and continuing as they grow up. Walk the dog. Or walk your children to school or to the farmer's market or wherever else you need to go. Incorporate a walk into holiday celebrations. Enjoy a nature hike in one of the beautiful parks in the Bay Area. Explore your local area by bicycle. Cool off during hot days by swimming together. Plant and maintain a vegetable and flower garden with your children. Sing and dance to music together. Hold a jump rope or Hula Hoop contest. Shoot some hoops together. Throw a Frisbee to each other. Play catch. Try skating or skateboarding.

Web sites that offer ideas for fun physical activities are [www.kidnetic.com](http://www.kidnetic.com) and [www.familytcl.net](http://www.familytcl.net). Try different activities and see what works well for your family or group. The time you invest will be well worth the fun and the memories.

**Tip of the month:** Get out and play regularly with your children to keep them (and you) healthy.

## Director's Corner

Child care/early education providers are increasingly being recognized as an important economic contribution in the communities they serve, as well as providing an infrastructure that supports child development practices.

Recognition of child care businesses as an economic force to be reckoned with has evolved slowly over the years due in large part to continuous advocacy on the part of the child care field in the State of California and the nation as a whole.

Now that child care is receiving increased government and media attention, child care providers and consumers of child care services have an opportunity and responsibility to have their voices heard. Child care issues and concerns about child development and early education dominate many political conversations across the nation and, while this focus continues, it is time to strike while the iron is hot!

It is important that early education providers and parents seek out and educate themselves about upcoming legislation with regard to the issues surrounding Preschool for All as well as other related child care/early education leg-

islation. The support of providers of care, and the parents who need and utilize services, is vital for this state to make good decisions for the future of our children's education. There are many meetings and discussions taking place around Alameda County that address these concerns and Child Care Links will be happy to provide any assistance necessary to assist you in securing the information you need to make informed decisions.

The child care/early education field has fought on your behalf over the years to bring children's issues to the forefront of policy makers in our state. It is now your turn to give back to the community by becoming proactive in order to ensure the sustainability of current programs and allow for development and funding for other programs that will enable children to have quality early educational experiences in order to facilitate normal growth and development in their early learning years.

Child Care Links is confident that you will take up this challenge and thanks you in advance for your commitment to children and families in the community.

**Child Care Links**  
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### Child Care Links Locations

**East County office:**  
(925) 417-8733  
1020 Serpentine Lane, Suite 102  
Pleasanton, CA 94566

**South County office:**  
(510) 791-9256  
39155 Liberty Street, Suite D430  
Fremont, CA 94538

**North County office:**  
(510) 268-0106  
250 E. 18th Street, 2nd Floor  
Oakland, CA 94606

**South & East County Office Hours:**  
8:00am to 12pm / 1:00pm to 5:00pm

[mail@childcarelinks.org](mailto:mail@childcarelinks.org)  
[www.childcarelinks.org](http://www.childcarelinks.org)

**North County Office Hours:**  
8:00am to 12pm / 1:00pm to 4:00pm