

Inclusion Project News

Choosing Toys for Children with Special Needs

Young, inquisitive children are learning and growing everyday and one of the ways that these little geniuses are learning is through play. Learning through play is an important step in the developmental process. What is that shape? What colors are in that block? How many cars do you have? Can you make it go over the ramp, under the chair, or through the tunnel? Through play, children are learning cause and effect. Play also teaches children how to share, socialize and be creative when using their imagination.

When it comes to children with special needs, it is particularly important to choose items that will help them to excel and succeed while considering the interest and the abilities of the child. Parents and providers should look for materials that focus on the child's developmental needs. Materials which promote their physical, sensory, communication and cognitive skills are ideal. When taking these categories into consideration, it is important to think about the features the toys have as well as their adaptability.

Bay Area Parent, a free publication

for parents discusses in one of their articles the importance of picking the right toys for children with special needs. The article features a company known as the National Lekotek Center. The National Lekotek Center is a non-profit organization based in Chicago, which works to make play accessible and successful for children with special needs through a new program that was recently launched called the AblePlay Rating System. This free online resource is available to parents and providers at www.ableplay.org. According to Bay Area Parents, the AblePlay Rating System features toys rated for their accessibility regarding physical, sensory, communication and cognitive disabilities. This system also "includes detailed product reviews and creative ideas for adaptive play." (Bay Area Parent) For more information on how to select a toy or items for a child with a special needs, go to www.lekotek.org/resources/informationontoystentips.html.

If you are a provider or parent and need assistance or support, please contact Kim Marshall at (925) 249-3940

Exempt Provider Outreach and Training Project

In order to increase the quality of care for all children in all child care settings, Child Care Links is now offering training and play group activities for individuals providing license exempt care. Who provides license exempt care? Grandparents, nannies, babysitters, neighbors and friends, to name a few. Trainings will be advertised in the community and the Child Care Links News mailed out bi-monthly.

If you know someone providing license exempt care, please let them know about our program. Similar to the Child Care Initiative Project (CCIP), license exempt participants will have the opportunity to earn incentives based on their participation in the program.

Play Group activities are scheduled twice a month in Child Care Links' conference room in Pleasanton. The Play Group schedule will include a story time, a movement activity, a craft or skill building activity and a healthy snack. The development of socialization, language, cognitive and motor skills will be focused on during Play Group sessions. Adults will be required to stay and participate with the child(ren) they enroll. Registration is required.

For more information regarding training or play group activities or to register to attend Play Groups, please contact Donnamarie Fuller at (925) 249-3923.

Parents and licensed providers desiring to participate in a similar activity are welcome to attend Family Read Night. Registration is required to participate. For information regarding dates and locations of Family Read Night sessions, please contact Donnamarie Fuller at (925) 249-3923.

Tri-ValleyHelp.org

Check out this website which provides current information about human service organizations in the Tri-Valley. The home page will feature a topic directory that will provide quick links to services, and comprehensive information about each organization that includes service descriptions, locations, hours, eligibility requirements, costs, language capabilities, and ADA accessibility.

The website was developed by the Tri-Valley Health Collaborative, which is a group of community leaders, health and human services professionals, local officials, interested citizens, and representatives from the education and faith communities who are committed to finding solutions to health care challenges in the Tri-Valley.

Child Care Initiative Project (CCIP)

March Calendar

3/2: Family Read Night/**Spanish**, 6:30–7:30 pm, Hill N Dale (CAPE, Inc.) 4150 Dorman Road, Pleasanton. Contact: Donnamarie Fuller

3/2: Family Read Night/**English**, 6-7 pm. Contact: Donnamarie Fuller

3/14: Harms/Clifford Rating Scales Training for Center Providers, 6-9 pm. Registration required. Contact: Kelly Van Raden

3/15: Community Service Planning, 3:50-4:20 pm. Contact: Donnamarie Fuller

3/15: Creating a Lending Library- **New Date!** 7-9 pm. Contact: Donnamarie Fuller

3/18: UC Davis – Culture and Care of Young Children, 9 am-2:30 pm, Academic credit available. Contact: Donnamarie Fuller

3/21: Information Night for Family Child Care Providers Regarding Working With Parents Around School Readiness/Transition to Kindergarten, 6-8 pm. Registration required. Contact: Kelly Van Raden

3/21: Directors of the Valley (DOV) Meeting, 1:00-2:30 pm. For location and information, call Laura Reno at (925) 373-0865

3/22: Child Passenger Safety Class and Car Seat Fitting Station, 1:00 pm, registration required. Contact: Shauna Brown

3/28: Valley Family Child Care Association Meeting (VFCCA), 6:30-9:00 pm. For meeting location and information, please call Meg Bell, (925) 449-5667

Congratulations to Linda Anderson, Sudha Gandhi, Marilyn Glass, Maria Gomez, Kathleen Hemza, Yingnian Liu, Jeannie Poe, Shelly Rios, Linda Ross, Binita Singh, Megha Thuse and Suman Trivedi for completing their CCIP training level goal! Participants reaching their goal will receive a certificate of completion and may be reimbursed for a portion, or the entire amount, of their yearly licensing renewal fee. Each provider will also receive a stipend that they can use to shop for materials and equipment for their program... Happy Shopping Ladies!

Several trainings are scheduled for

CCIP Training Schedule

There have been changes to the training schedule based on funding and trainer availability.

Please refer to the CCIP calendar mailed out in February 2006 for an up-to-date training schedule.

the months of March and April including Community Service Planning, Creating a Lending Library, Culture and Care of Young Children and Emergency Preparedness. Participation in Creating a Lending Library will be limited so that enough support materials will be on hand for all participants. As with all CCIP sponsored trainings, all family home day care providers are invited to attend, however, CCIP participants will have priority when registering.

When Attending CCIP Trainings, please remember to:

Make sure to bring your professional growth training verification forms with you when attending training. Child Care Links is not always able to provide contact information for individual trainers. Certificates and verification forms will be issued by the agency providing the training.

It is the responsibility of the provider to track the title, date and number of hours of training attended.

IMPORTANT CALENDAR INFORMATION

Save the dates!

**Provider Recognition Event
May 16, 2006**

**ECC/First 5 Alameda County
Family Child Care Fair
June 10, 2006**

**CCL Health & Safety Fair
June 24, 2006**

Please note:

All training is held at Child Care Links (CCL) Conference Room, 1020 Serpentine Lane, Suite 104 in Pleasanton, **unless otherwise noted**. Registration is **required** for all CCL training & workshops.

Calendar contacts:

East County Office
(925) 417-8733

E-mail

events@childcarelinks.org (please write contact name in subject line).

Pru Bartlett, R & R Specialist, (925) 249-3935

Shauna Brown, Community Specialist, (925) 249-3925

Donnamarie Fuller, Project Specialist, (925) 249-3923

Kim Marshall, Inclusion Project Coordinator, (925) 249-3940

Kelly Van Raden, Career Advocate, (925) 249-3920

Family Read Night

Child Care Links' Family Read Night program is offered in English and Spanish at the following sites.

In English:

March 2, 6-7 pm, Child Care Links' Conference Room, 1020 Serpentine Lane, #104, Pleasanton

April 6, 6-7 pm, Livermore Play School, 5261 East Avenue, Livermore

In Spanish:

Marzo (March) 2, 6:30 – 7:30 pm, Hill N Dale (CAPE, Inc.) 4150 Dorman Road, Pleasanton

Abril (April) 6, 6:30 – 7:30 pm, Leahy (CAPE, Inc. & LHA) Preschool Room, 3203 Leahy Way, Livermore

Family Read Night is a great opportunity to set aside the hectic over-scheduling of life and spend some time together as a family – no matter what age you are.

Please contact Donnamarie Fuller at (925) 249-3923 for more information. Registration for Family Read Night will be required as space and parking are limited.

From the Shelf... at the Fran Caulkins Memorial Resource Library

The Kid's Guide to Service Projects, by Barbara A. Lewis, offers simple and effective ideas for more than 500 for community service projects. Ideas are organized by topic, i.e., friendship, safety, senior citizens, and include a step by step plan for organizing and implementing your project. This text will be used at the Community Service Planning meeting on March 15th.

Association Information

Valley Family Child Care Association

Mission: To provide education opportunities, support, networking, and fellowship for fellow licensed family child care providers. Informed and educated members provide a higher quality of child care.

President: Renee Luce, (925) 606-8298

Membership: Meg Bell, (925) 449-5667

Hospitality: Judy D'India, (925) 245-1816

Directors of the Valley (DOV)

Goals: Directors of the Valley or "DOV" meet to offer each other encouragement, to share concerns of interest with the group and to advocate for children, families, and the child care profession.

Co-Chair: Laura Reno (925) 373-0865

Co-Chair: Joan Hottinger, (925) 846-5455

February Calendar

4/1: *Our Focus the Child Conference*, 8 am-5 pm, Chabot College 25555 Hesperian Blvd. Hayward. For Conference information contact Valerie Ball at (925) 424-1170. ½ unit of College Credit is available.

4/1: *UC Davis – Culture and Care of Young Children*, 9 am-2:30 pm, Academic Credit Available. Contact: Donnamarie Fuller

4/5: *Emergency Preparedness*, 7-9 pm, Contact: Donnamarie Fuller

4/6: *Family Read Night/Spanish*, 6:30–7:30 pm, Leahy (CAPE, Inc. & LHA) Preschool Room, 3203 Leahy Way, Livermore. Contact: Donnamarie Fuller

4/6: *Family Read Night/English*, 6-7 pm Livermore Play School, 5261 East Avenue, Livermore. Contact: Donnamarie Fuller

4/15: *Valley Family Child Care Association Meeting (VFCCA)*, 6:30-9:00 pm. For meeting location and information, please call Meg Bell, (925) 449-5667

4/18: *Directors of the Valley (DOV) Meeting*, 1:00-2:30 pm. For location and information, call Laura Reno at (925) 373-0865

4/26: *Child Passenger Safety Class and Car Seat Fitting Station*, 1:00 pm, registration required. Contact: Shauna Brown

Health & Safety

Reimbursement of health & safety training costs is available for family home providers, family home provider aides, license exempt providers and center based staff in the cities of Livermore, Pleasanton, Dublin and Sunol. Training must have occurred between July 1, 2005 and June 30, 2006. Each eligible participant may receive up to \$65.00 for the completion of health and safety training (CPR, first aid, prevention of infectious disease, preventative health practices, and injury prevention). The recipient must pay at least \$5.00 of the cost of the training. Contact: Pru Bartlett.

Tips for Family Child Care Providers: Poison Prevention in the Child Care Setting

Child Passenger Safety News

In Alameda County, more than 95% of car seats are used or installed incorrectly. Child Care Links has teamed up with the Pleasanton Police Department to offer a free service aimed at assuring children ride safely. Parents and child care providers now have the opportunity to learn the basics of child passenger safety in a classroom setting followed by hands-on instruction on proper installation and fitting of car seats.

Participants will first learn the basics on how to keep your child safe while riding in vehicles. The class will cover common car seat misuse, the 5 Step Test to determine if your child is ready to ride with a seat belt and checking for recalls. After the class, parents receive hands-on instruction from a certified child passenger safety technician on properly installing your child's car seat.

Parents and child care providers with infant seats, car seats and booster seats are encouraged to come to this class and fitting station or a car seat check up and have your seat/s checked! The class and fitting station are offered on a monthly basis. Children are welcome and should be present for the fitting station. Registration is required. For more information or to register for a class, please call (925) 417-8733

Poison centers are available throughout United States and Canada and most are available 24 hours a day to answer questions.

800-POISON- 1

The age-old adage "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" is especially pertinent in poisonings. Every ingestion of a non-food item is a potential poisoning. Poisonings include ingestion, absorption through skin (dermal), substance in the eyes (ocular), inhalation exposures, and stings and bites (envenomation). Approximately 60 percent of poisonings reported to poison centers in the United States are pediatric cases. Fortunately, only a small percentage of these poisoning incidents occur in childcare centers.

There are several steps that can be taken to prevent poisonings:

- All medicines brought into the center must be placed in a locked cabinet or a locked box in the refrigerator. Never leave medicines in a diaper bag or child's cubby. Never accept unlabeled bottles from parents. Request written and signed instructions for all medicines that are to be given while the child is in your care. Keep all purses and bags of staff, parents and visitors up and out of reach.
- The number one ingestion problem for children less than one year of age involves plants. Know what is in your area. Identify all plants both inside and in outdoor play areas. After rainy days, be especially alert for mushrooms, which may have sprouted overnight.
- Do not store cleaning products under the sink which is eye level for toddlers. Store all cleaning products in locked cabinets. Never mix cleaning products, because some products produce toxic gases when mixed and inhaling these gases can cause serious problems. Keep all cleaning products in their original containers and

be carefully to avoid storing non-food items in food containers.

- Use art supplies that are non-toxic. Even though a product might not be toxic, it may be still be a choking hazard. Children often put crayons, modeling clay, and other objects in their mouths that pose choking hazards.
- Call the area poison center about every exposure. Some products are so toxic that less than a quarter of a teaspoon may be poisonous. Have the poison center number posted near the telephone. Many poison centers have stickers for your phone and magnets for your refrigerator. Do not follow instructions on the label of the product, because up to 40 percent of all labels have incorrect treatment recommendations!
- Keep basic first aid treatments available for poisonings. Equipment for cool compresses, eyewashes, diphenhydramine, an antihistamine sold over the counter as Benadryl and generically, and hydrocortisone creams are also essentials for a first aid kit. Include poison information during in-service training sessions for staff.

A national 800 (toll free) number for public access to poison control services has been proposed. Several states now can call 800-POISON-1 for information. Poison centers are available throughout United States and Canada and most are available 24 hours a day to answer questions. For further information, check with your local poison center. The telephone number for the centers can usually be found on the first page of a telephone directory.