



October/November 2003

Pleasanton Provider News

Calendar

- 10/28 Contracts and Liability Insurance Workshop, 7-9:30 pm.** Child Care Links Pleasanton office. A workshop presented by the Valley Family Child Care Association in collaboration with Child Care Links. Please call (925) 417-8733 to register.
- 11/1 UC Davis Training: Partnering with Parents. 8:30 am - 4 pm.** Child Care Links Pleasanton Office. Continuing education units are available. To register please call (925) 417-8733.
- 11/4 Community Care Licensing Orientation, 9:30 am - 12 pm.** Child Care Links Pleasanton Office. No pre-registration necessary. This is the first step to becoming a licensed Family Child Care Provider. For more information call Pru at (925) 417-8733.
- 11/12 Child Care Initiative Project (CCIP) Orientation. 6:45 - 8 pm.** Child Care Links Pleasanton Office. For more information see page 2 or call Donna-marie at (925) 249-3923.

Notes & News

Attention Pleasanton Child Care Providers & Center Directors!!! Child Care Links began its Annual Update! Thank you to all the providers who have sent in their updates already. If you have not updated your file already, your entire file will need to be updated on NACCRRAware.

This year providers can update their file one of the following ways:

- on our agency website www.childcarelinks.org
- by US Mail (in response to the questionnaire sent out)
- by phone

Participation in the Annual Update is mandatory for providers wishing to remain on the Child Care Links database. Collecting this data helps us track supply & demand for child care in the Tri-Valley area and establish the local neighborhood. If you have further questions, please feel free to call the Community Services Department at (925) 417-8733.

Family Read Night

Child Care Links' Family Read Night program serves children newborn through 4 years old. Bring the whole family for an evening of fun. The Family Read Night series, presented by Child Care Links, is made possible by an Every Child Counts Grant through the Alameda County Children and Families Commission.

English Sessions/Pleasanton: 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month, 6-7 pm, Child Care Links Conference Room, 1020 Serpentine Lane, Suite 104, Pleasanton, CA.

Upcoming dates: November 6th & 20th

August Referrals

Services	#
Requests for referral	78
Total Children	91
Type of Request	
Phone	60
E-mail	16
Walk-in	2
Type of Request Total	78
Age of Child	
Infant (NB-2)	39
Preschool (2-5.11)	26
School Age (5 & up)	26
Age of Child Total	91
Care Schedule	
Full Time (>30 hours)	65
Part Time (<30 hours)	26
Care Schedule Total	91
Special Schedule	
Before and/or after school	26
Summer only	0
Evening care	0
Drop-in	6
Weekends	3
Special Schedule Total	35

Children & Volunteerism

As school age child care providers, we must offer activities that are at the right level for the children. Older children need new challenges and opportunities. One way to challenge older children is to provide volunteer opportunities.

The key to success is to carefully plan your volunteer program. We followed the steps listed below to develop a volunteer program for older children in our center. The day care center serves children from four months through 12 years old. Our school-age children participated in the infant, toddler, and preschool classrooms.

Each child participated for one month in a classroom. They participated in activities at specific times. The supervising teacher completed a brief evaluation form at the end of this time. The school-age staff and the child read the evaluation together and talked about the experience from the child's point of view.

The child could then move on to a new classroom. Volunteer programs within centers can be hard to arrange. Sometimes, older children are counted in the staff-child ratios. Or there may be restrictions on using children as volunteers. Check with your state licensing office for guidelines. Keep in mind that you can design a volunteer program in many different settings. You may want to contact the library, an office, or a home for the elderly.

The steps in developing a volunteer program follow:

1. Develop program goals. What do you want the children to gain from the experience? Keep the goals simple. Use a vocabulary the

children can understand. For example, the goal may be "Read a story at group time." Goals help children know what is expected of them. They will also help you evaluate the success of the program.

2. Organize the program. Careful planning will make your program successful. Use the following questions as a guide in planning: Where will the child be assigned? Who will be the supervising adult? How long will one assignment last for a child? Who will define the job tasks for the child? What exactly will the child do? What safety factors must be considered? How will the child's participation be evaluated? Will you give the child written feedback or simply talk with the child?

3. Set up guidelines. Children must know what is expected of them. They must also know what will happen if they do not act appropriately.

4. Gain support. Present your program plan in writing to your director. With their approval, show the plan to the adults who will supervise the volunteer experience and to the children's parents. Meet with those who will supervise the volunteers to discuss the program in depth. Assure them that you will meet with them regularly to assist with problems that may arise. Send a letter to parents. Tell them about the program, what their child will gain, and what support you will need from them.

5. Motivate the children. A successful volunteer program begins by motivating children to want to help others. Plan activities that will help children learn the importance of volunteering. Discuss volunteer organizations in your area, and invite volunteer coordinators to speak on

the importance of volunteer services.

6. Prepare the children. Introduce the volunteer program you have selected. Identify those who are interested. Provide orientation workshops on the responsibilities of a volunteer and what to do in case they have a problem. Arrange for children to visit their assigned placements briefly before actually participating.

7. Develop a recognition system. Self-satisfaction is the goal of a volunteer program. But children, like adults, will need ongoing encouragement during their participation in the program. Put photographs of the volunteers on the bulletin board. Write about the program in the school newsletter.

8. Evaluate the program. All programs can be better. Consider things that went well and problems that came up. Learn from your mistakes. Make changes based on what you learned. Each center must form and shape a program that meets their children's needs.

Our society benefits greatly from the work of many volunteers. One of the greatest gifts we can give to children is the desire to help others. Consider offering volunteer opportunities in your program.

Excerpted from: "Volunteer Activities for Children", National Network for Child Care - NNCC. Part of CYFERNET, the National Extension Service Children Youth and Family Educational Research Network.