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Provider Appreciation Through Parent Support

Provider Appreciation Day is a yearly event for parents and the Community to recognize the importance of child care providers and applaud their everyday dedication to supporting children and their families. Child care providers support families and make it possible for many parents to work and contribute to the national economy. Since 1996, Provider Appreciation Day has been celebrated on the Friday before Mother's Day which this year is **Friday, May 6th**. When you think about the training, skills, and responsibilities good child care providers have, it is important to acknowledge their roles and show them appreciation by giving positive feedback. Parents are in the best position to show they value their child's provider by actively participating throughout the year. The following ideas are just a few of the ways parents can support providers.

Parents: Talk with your child's teacher about how you can get involved.

Child Care Providers: Educate parents regarding what supports you need.

Some ideas to begin with:

- send in objects, food or pictures from home that contribute to the curriculum
- collect free household items such as fabric, egg cartons, magazines, wood scraps, jars, etc.
- make special foods for birthdays or holidays
- contribute to or offer to start a school newsletter
- design and/or manage the program's website
- work on the parents organization - consider co-chairing a position
- spearhead or support fundraising efforts
- share a hobby or demonstrate a craft to the class

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Ice Sculptures from www.SharronKrull.com Playing is Learning!

Ice Sculptures are a really "cool" way to explore water in all its physical states.

Materials:

Ice-cubes, blocks, etc.

Rock salt

Liquid Watercolor or food coloring (red, yellow, blue)

Small containers/cups to hold the salt and coloring

Table salt

Kosher salt (optional)

Eye droppers or pipettes

Sensory tub or water/sand table

Procedure:

1. Freeze water in a variety of sizes and shapes of empty containers-plastic bowls, jello molds, cardboard milk containers, ice cube trays, etc.
2. Empty the ice shapes and ice cubes into the sensory tub or water table
3. Place small cups of salt and rock salt in the tub
4. Place small cups of Liquid Watercolor in tub. Add a pipette or eye dropper to each cup.
5. Have children sprinkle salt and rock salt on the ice shapes. Encourage them to add ice cubes to the larger ice shapes. As the salt melts the ice, the ice cubes and ice pieces will stick to each other creating a unique "sculpture."
6. Children then use the pipettes to drop the Liquid Watercolors into the cracks and holes created by the rock salt and salt. *(Remember to take a photo of the ice sculpture before it melts away)*

Learning Outcomes/Desired Results:

1. Cognitive--Science-Cause and Effect--as you discuss the chemical reaction that ice has when salt is sprinkled on it. Salt lowers the freezing point of ice, causing it to melt.
2. Cognitive--Science-Cause and Effect-solids transforming into liquids
3. Cognitive-Science-Cause and Effect-mixing primary colors (red, yellow, blue) you make the secondary colors (orange, green, and purple)
4. Physical-Fine Motor Skills-using small muscles (pincher grasp) in fingers to squeeze the bulb of the pipette or dropper and to pick up grains of salt and chunks of rock salt.
5. Physical-Fine Motor Skills-hand-eye coordination-hands and eyes working together to accomplish a task-using fingers to manipulate pipette with color and squirting colors into salt crevices
6. Cognitive-Problem Solving and Critical Thinking-some children will have difficulty in figuring out how to get the color into the pipette and then onto the ice. Handling the eye dropper will be a challenge, so they should be shown how to use it and encouraged to keep trying until they succeed.
7. Language Development as children talk excitedly about what they see happening.
8. Encourages creativity and persistence.
9. Social/Emotional Development is fostered as this is an open-ended activity with no right or wrong way to do this activity. It promotes children's self-esteem.

In Season... Avocados: Classic Guacamole

Did you know avocados are a fruit, not a vegetable? Avocados are sodium and cholesterol-free and have only five grams of fat per serving. Avocados provide nearly 20 essential nutrients, including fiber, folic acid, potassium, Vitamins E & B. For more nutrition activities visit www.harvestofthemonth.com

Ingredients to coarsely mash using a fork:

4 ripe avocados, seeded and peeled

2 Tbsp. lemon juice

1 clove garlic, crushed

1 tomato, finely chopped

¼ cup finely chopped onion

⅛ tsp. ground cumin

3 drops hot pepper sauce.

Enjoy with tortilla chips!



When Does the Subsidy Program Enroll?

"My family has been on the Centralized Eligibility List (CEL) forever!"

"I know somebody that got services for their family right away!"

Have you ever overheard those comments (or said them yourself)? There are four different ways that families can enter the Choices for Children child care subsidy program and unfortunately the wait does vary. Specific to Alpine County, families receiving Alpine County TANF can receive services if deemed eligible by the Alpine County Dept. of Human Services for CalWORKs Stage 1 child care services. These families are generally looking for work, in school, or in new employment. This is an entitlement program and Alpine County families referred for Stage 1 services do not need to go onto the CEL. Eligible El Dorado County families receive CalWORKs Stage 1 child care directly from the Department of Human Services rather than through Choices for Children. Perhaps the most common way a family enrolls onto CFC's program is by having CalWORKs Stage 2 child care eligibility. These families typically are referred by the Department of Human Services (in either county) and have recently started new employment. Families are eligible for this program if they are currently on or have been on TANF (cash aid) within the last 24 months. There is little to no wait time for enrollment in this program as Stage 2 is currently an entitlement program. Another way a family can access services is through the Centralized Eligibility List (CEL). Any El Dorado or Alpine county resident that meets the income qualifications and has a verifiable need for services can qualify for child care through the CEL. Because there are so many families that qualify, your "rank" on the CEL is determined by your income and family size, wait times on the CEL can vary. In addition, Choices for Children must have funding available before families can be selected, lowest rank first, off of the CEL. There are frequently long periods of time where there is no funding available for new families to be enrolled from the CEL. The final way a family can enroll on the subsidy program is by referral from either El Dorado or Alpine County Child Protective Services or another legally qualified professional. Families eligible for this type of service, called respite care, have children identified at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Respite referred families are placed on the CEL when there is no funding to immediately enroll them and they are contacted as soon as funding becomes available. Per state regulations, CPS referred families will receive priority over income eligible families on the Centralized Eligibility List. If you have additional questions about enrollment or eligibility for subsidized care please contact your local Choices for Children office and ask to speak with a Subsidy Counselor. Cameron Park: (530) 676-0707 South Lake Tahoe/Alpine: (877) 541-5848.

Resource & Referral Program: Family Child Care Providers Needed



As reported in our Winter 2010/2011 issue, licensed family child care homes are needed in our community to help provide part-time care, summer care, and evening and weekend care. Becoming a licensed family child care home is a relatively easy process. As a small business owner, family child care providers set their hours of care, ages of children they prefer provide care, and their rate for care. In other words– they decide when they will provide care, for whom, and for how much. Small family child care homes are typically licensed to serve 8 children at a time. (If the child care provider has children of their own under the age of ten– their children are counted toward the 8). Currently family child care homes in the Tahoe area are charging an average of \$5.00 hour or \$30.00 a day. Please call our office 694-2129 for more information.

New Crib Safety Standards

In mid-December 2010 The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) voted unanimously to approve new mandatory standards for full-size and non-full-size baby cribs. The federal crib standards had not been updated in nearly 30 years and these new rules are expected to usher in a safer generation of cribs.

Once they become effective, the mandatory crib standards will: (1) stop the manufacture and sale of dangerous, traditional drop-side cribs; (2) make mattress supports stronger; (3) make crib hardware more durable; and (4) make safety testing more rigorous. CPSC has recalled more than 11 million dangerous cribs since 2007. (Check to see if your crib has been recalled. <http://www.cpsc.gov/cgi-bin/cribs.aspx>) Detaching drop-side rails were associated with at least 32 infant suffocation and strangulation deaths since 2000. Additional deaths have occurred due to faulty or defective hardware. These new standards aim to prevent these tragedies and keep children safe in their cribs.

Effective **June 2011**, cribs manufactured, sold, or leased in the United States must comply with the new federal standards. Beginning **12/28/2012**, child care facilities, such as family child care homes and infant centers, and places of public accommodation, such as hotels and motels, must have compliant cribs in their facilities. For more information on crib safety and safe sleep environments for baby, visit CPSC's crib information center at: www.cpsc.gov/info/cribs/index.html

8 Simple Crib Facts:

1. No retrofitting will be allowed.
2. Manufacturers must meet new standards by June 2011.
3. The new rules apply to child care facilities and public accommodations such as hotels beginning 12/28/2012.
4. **DO NOT REPLACE YOUR CRIBS TODAY!** There is little chance that cribs purchased today will meet the new standards.
5. Rules affect non-full size AND full-size cribs.
6. The new rules will affect EVERY crib not just cribs with drop sides.
7. CPSC will inspect and fine providers violating these rules beginning on 12/29/2012
8. Although parents are not mentioned specially they would be included in "placement in the stream of commerce" category which would not allow the to re-sell or buy cribs which do not meet the new rules. *National Child Care Association (NCCA) nccanet.org*



Babies spend much of their time sleeping; therefore, the nursery should be the safest room in the house. Check to see if your crib has been recalled... <http://www.cpsc.gov/cgi-bin/cribs.aspx>

A few simple rules will keep babies sleeping safely and will give parents a better night's sleep:

1. To prevent suffocation, never place pillows or thick quilts in a baby's sleep environment. Also, make sure there are no gaps larger than two fingers between the sides of the crib and the mattress.
2. Proper assembly of cribs is paramount - Follow the instructions provided and make sure that every part is installed correctly. If you are not sure, call the manufacturer for assistance.
3. Do not use cribs older than 10 years or broken or modified cribs. Infants can strangle to death if their bodies pass through gaps between loose components or broken slats while their heads remain entrapped.
4. Set up play yards properly according to manufacturers' directions. Only use the mattress pad provided with the play yard; do not add extra padding.
5. Never place a crib near a window with blind, or any cords ; babies can strangle on cords.

Emergency Preparedness and Responses *(El Dorado County)*

Over the years, we have experienced a variety of emergencies in El Dorado County that have affected child care programs. As a result, Choices for Children along with the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department and other stakeholders have worked together to improve notification practices of child care providers during emergency situations. Described below are the systems currently in practice.

- **Door-to-Door Notification:** Each resident, including licensed child care providers in El Dorado County, receive door-to-door notification, as needed and directed by the EDC Sheriff's Office. It may be helpful to provide some identifier such as a sign or sticker so that a responding Sheriff would be aware of the need for an elevated level of assistance.
- **Website Press Releases:** The Sheriff's Public Information Officer prepares a press release which is posted on their official website pertaining to current and accurate information regarding imminent danger or emergency situations. Providers can access this via their computers, should they be alerted of a dangerous situation affecting their site. To access the website go to: <http://www.co.el-dorado.ca.us/sheriff/> Recent press releases are listed and the general public can register to receive press releases via email.
- **Emergency Notification:** When Choices for Children is notified that a dangerous situation may exist, every effort will be made to notify the licensed child care facilities in the affected area. Due to the nature of emergencies, reliable information may be limited. This is not a reverse 911 system.
- **Caution Code:** Choices for Children electronically transfers provider information (names, addresses, phone numbers) to the Sheriff's dispatch manager on a quarterly basis. This information is uploaded into the Sheriff's data base and a caution code is placed on the address to indicate there are multiple children on site. The Sheriff's Department then uses this information when responding to a call at that specific address. Child care programs can choose to opt out of being entered into the Sheriff database.

If you have any questions regarding this process, please call Rene Line, 530-676-0707 ext. 101 in Cameron Park or Nadine Trouyet-Davis, 530-541-5848 ext. 108.



In addition, an emergency may end in tragedy as we experienced in the recent shooting of a school principal. When children hear tragic news they may become fearful and ask many questions as they try to understand what has happened. Parents and providers can help by providing a coherent narrative of the event, expressing their own feelings and acknowledging the child's feelings and fears. Children need to know that they can turn to us to help them understand the harsh and sometimes brutal realities of the world. Difficult and painful conversations provide an opportunity to restore a child's sense of safety and security when parents and providers offer reassurances that they are doing all that can be done to protect the child from danger. Keeping up daily routines helps to bring back normalcy. Our children will thrive even under difficult circumstances when we provide emotional support.

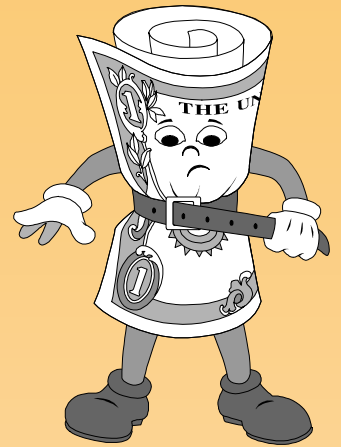
Check out your local CfC Resource Lending Library for books on emotional support.

Legislative Update: The Budget Crisis is Far from Over

Despite some national indicators that the recession has ended, California continues to have a large gap between spending and revenue. The current budget deficit is estimated at \$25.4 billion and Governor Brown has proposed a “shock and awe” budget that would close the gap with a combination of cuts (\$12.5 billion) and revenue extensions (\$12 billion) along with \$1.9 billion in “other solutions” to close the gap and provide a funding reserve.

The revenue extensions sought by the governor are dependent upon voters. He is seeking a 5-year extension to tax increases that were passed 2 years ago to increase income, sales, and vehicle taxes. It will remain to be seen if the legislature votes to hold a June election to give voters the opportunity to either approve or deny these extensions. If voters do not approve the extensions, the governor and the legislature will need to find other means to close the budget gap.

A large portion of the proposed cuts come from making changes to Child Development programs and various Social Services programs including Medi-Cal. The proposed reduction to California Department of Education child care programs is \$716 million, equivalent to cutting services for approximately 37,259 children if all cuts and reforms that were proposed are put into place.



The Governor’s proposal includes:

- Reduction of eligibility for subsidized child care (does not include State Preschool) from 75 % to 60% of the State Median Income. Currently, the maximum income for a family of 3 is \$3,769. It would be reduced to \$3,015 per month.
- Elimination of child care subsidy services for 11 & 12 year old children.
- Policy changes to reduce the amount of subsidy offered to clients and thus the amount of reimbursement available to providers. Choices for Children would work with the El Dorado County Office of Education to set provider maximum reimbursements and family co-pays. More clarification on how this proposal would work is being sought.
- Elimination of the Centralized Eligibility List. With this proposal each subsidized child care program would again maintain separate waiting lists for openings at their site(s) and families would need to contact each site they were interested in to ensure they were on the site’s list.

Other reforms proposed in the 2011-2012 state budget include:

- Shortening CalWORKs time limits from the current 60 month lifetime limit to 48 months. This change in time limit would be retroactive to 1998 for aid received by any member of the assistance unit.
- Cut CalWORKs cash grants by 13% as of June 1, 2011.
- Increase premiums for Healthy Families recipients with incomes above 150% of the Federal Poverty Level.
- Increase co-pays for Healthy Families recipients.
- Eliminate vision benefits for Healthy Families recipients.

Choices for Children will continue to gather the latest budget information as discussion and decisions are made in Sacramento.

March

- 6-** Alpine Kids: Kirkwood Cross Country Skiing. 10 am. Must reserve spot with Edie 694-2934.
- 8- Alpine Play & Learn: Beauty in Bloom** 10:30 am -12:30 pm. Hands-on activities and lunch. Free. You do not need to bring a child to attend. 694-2129
- 9-** Licensing Orientation for Family Child Care Homes from 9 am to 1 pm at CfC in Tahoe. (Cost is \$25). Call Community Care Licensing at 916-263-5744 to register. Prospective licensees must bring payment receipt to orientation.
- 12-** Stress Management Workshop: 9 am-12 pm at the South Lake Tahoe Library (free)
- 16-** Alpine County Local Child Care Planning Council Meeting 12:30 pm in Room 1 at the Alpine Learning Center.
- 19-** Alpine Kids: Monster Trucks in Reno at 1:30 pm. Must reserve spot with Edie 694-2934.
- 25-** Application for Mentor Teacher Program due to LTCC by noon. Contact Karen Allen:541-4660 ext354
- 30-** Science Safari with Lakeshore Products Rep., John Bell providing simple age-appropriate activities for a successful science curriculum: from 6:30 pm-8:30 pm at The Children's Cabinet-Reno(\$7)
- 31, 1, 2-** NevAEYC Early Childhood Conference at the Grand Sierra Resort in Reno, Nevada featuring the Lisa Murphy the Ooey Gooey Lady and Award-winning children's and family music performer Charlotte Diamond.

American Red Cross- Sac. Sierra Chapter

For information on CA Child Care Preventive Health & Safety Training, Pediatric CPR & First Aid visit www.sacsierraredcross.org or call 916-368-3130

April

- 1-2-** NevAEYC Conference in Reno continues.
- 7-** Early Care & Education/Kindergarten School Readiness Articulation Day "Integrating Literacy Strategies in Math & Science": at the Lake Tahoe Unified School District Office, Education Board-room from 12:30-3:00pm. RSVP by calling Julie Irwin at 530-295-2457 by April 1st, 2011. (free)
- 10-** Alpine Kids: Ice Skating SLT 12:30 pm. Must reserve spot with Edie 694-2934.
- 12- Alpine Play & Learn: Treasures from Trash** 5:30 pm -7:30 pm. Dinner and hands-on activities. Free, fun family activity! 694-2129
- 14- Annual Alpine CFC Spring Party and Egg Hunt 3:15 sharp** at DVS. 694-2129
- 16-** CfC 20th Annual Child Care Provider Appreciation Breakfast featuring Positive Discipline with Cheryl Erwin & Green Art Activities: 8 am-noon at Lake Tahoe Golf Course. Register early as space is limited. (\$10) 877-541-5848
- 23-** CPR Training from 8 am to noon at CfC. (Cost is \$45). Call CfC to register and pre pay.
- 23-** First Aid Training from 1 -5 pm at CfC.



May

- 14-** Alpine Kids: Live performance of *Oklahoma* in Carson City. 12:00 pm. Must reserve spot with Edie 694-2934.
- 17- Alpine Play & Learn: Dive Into Summer** 10:30 am -12:30 pm. Hands-on activities and lunch. Free. You do not need to bring a child to attend. 694-2129
- 20-22-** Alpine Kids: Camping at Grover's Hot Springs. Must reserve spot with Edie 694-2934.

Provider Appreciation Through Parent Support *Continued*

- put on a mini-performance if you play an instrument
- cut out patterns or help prepare art projects
- repair books or toys
- tape a story for the class to hear
- read a book or tell a favorite tale from your childhood

Active, engaged, family involvement benefits the child care program, the family, and most importantly, the child. By working more closely with each other, there will be increased opportunities for both parents and providers to express their feelings and views, ask questions, and get to know just how the child care program is working for the child. Parents and provider develop a richer relationship, learning from one another by sharing their insights, strengths, ideas, and resources. Children benefit by feeling a stronger connection between school and home and the improved quality of care that follows.



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Our mission is to enrich children's lives through innovative support, education, and enhanced family and provider services. Our programs put families at the center of a community of support services.