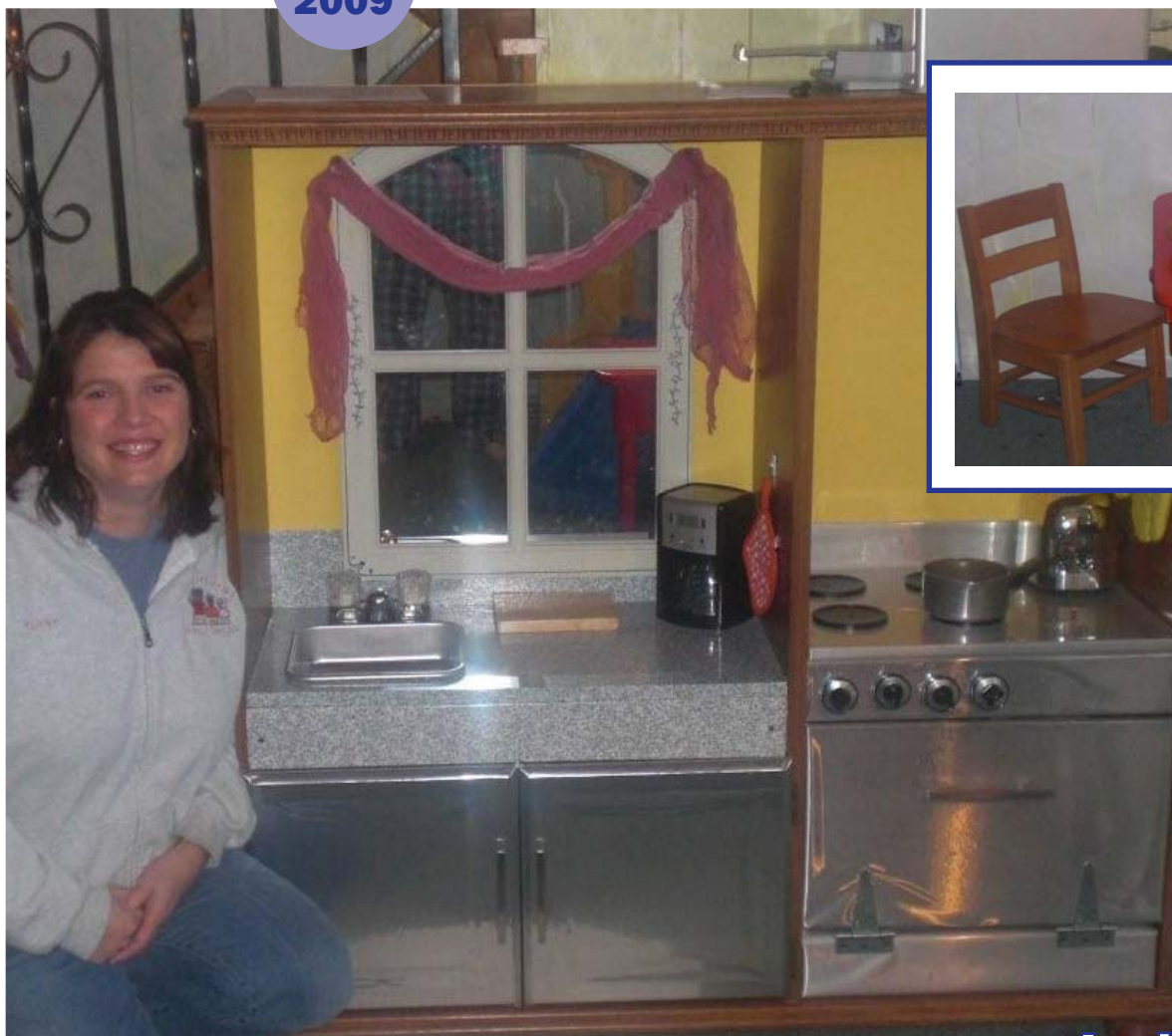




Capital District  
Child Care  
Council

# Leader

WINTER  
2009



### Go Green!

Kim Fowler, family child care provider, created this “dream kitchen” entirely out of recycled, low-cost, and second hand items.

See **viewpoint** pg. 3.

## Inside this issue

### Save the Date!

The Council’s Early Childhood Conference will be held on President’s Day, February 16, 2009 at LaSalle Institute in Troy.

There will be 32 new and exciting workshops to choose from. Remember to register early for the conference in order to secure the workshops of your choice. Participants will find workshops designed specifically for infant toddler teachers, as well as preschool teachers. Some of the new titles include: “Yoga for Young

Children,” “Going Green: Environmentally Friendly Child Care,” and “Solving Conflict & Creating Peaceful Environments.” There will also be a Spanish Track and excellent vendors to visit throughout the day.

Attendance at the conference will provide an exciting day of training and networking, and will earn participants six hours towards the thirty hours of training that is required every licensing period. See you there!

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## From the Executive Director

By Patricia Skinner, Executive Director



New York State has recently released plans for a Quality Rating and Improvement System called, "QUALITYstarsNY." This system is being developed for early care and

education programs. Once implemented, it will recognize, encourage, and reward quality settings in New York State where children are learning every day. For more information, visit [www.earlychildhood.org](http://www.earlychildhood.org). Your comments on this still developing program are welcomed.

On a completely different note, if you're like me, you've heard just about all of the bad news that you can stand over the past few months. Even though we are in the middle of tough economic times in our state and nation, there are so many reasons to look forward to better times in the future. Early childhood education is being acknowledged, more than ever before, for its importance in the lives of children and families. Not only do you, as Early Educators teach our youngest learners to become more productive students and citizens, but you also provide a valuable work support to families. I believe that as professionals, we will all emerge from this current crisis even stronger, if we remain dedicated to our profession, while still being open to new ideas. I recently heard a quote that seemed exceedingly relevant to today,

*"A bend in the road is not the end of the road, unless you fail to make the turn."*

That's never been more true than now. Happy New Year to all of you who work so hard to provide quality care to the children in our community!

~Patty

## Council Honors ACAP at Annual Meeting

The Capital District Child Care Council held its Annual Meeting on December 3, 2008. The Annual *Community Collaborator Who Cares* award was presented to the Albany Community Action Program (ACAP). ACAP has been a long time partner of the Council, in the CDA Preparation Program, and in the innovative new teacher training series. There to accept the award on behalf of ACAP was Kathy Cloutier, Executive Director, who stated, "I love to work with the Child Care Council. They are always ready to work, and they think outside the box." Thank you and congratulations to ACAP!

The membership voted on and approved the nomination of Andrea Adrian, Susan Gorman, Nancy Johnson, Kelly Landrio, Michael Ruzza and Brandi Welsh for positions on the Board of Directors. Andrea is a bilingual family child care provider in Schenectady County, Susan is the Fulton Early Childhood Education Center Principal for the Schenectady City School District, Nancy is the Assistant Children's Center Director at the YWCA of Schenectady, Kelly is the Fulton County YMCA Child Care Director, Michael is the YWCA of Schenectady Yates Village Child Care Center Site Coordinator and Brandi is the Program Director at Pierce Hall at the Children's Place in Albany.

The Council also thanked Deirdre Greco, retiring Board member, for her years of service to the Child Care Council.

Also during the Annual Meeting, Debbie Engel, owner/operator of Mama Deb's Daycare in Rotterdam, was named the fourth recipient of the annual *Dianne Meckler Scholarship Award*. Ms. Engel, who has been registered as a family child care provider since April, 2004, received her Child Development Associate (CDA) in 2006 and her program accreditation from the National Association of Family Child Care in August, 2008. As the Vice-President of the Capital District Family Day Care Association, Debbie has helped increase the organization's membership and has provided support and training to fellow family child care providers. Ms. Engel plans on using the scholarship to attend her first national conference, sponsored by the National Association of Family Child Care, in Baltimore, Maryland.



Pictured from left to right: Kenyette Currie, Kathy Cloutier, Patty Skinner, Terry Kimball, Liz Roberts-Laura



Pictured from left to right: Dierdre Greco, Liz Roberts-Laura



Pictured from left to right: Debbie Engel, Lynda Weismantel

# viewpoint

# GO GREEN

## For a Huge Dramatic Effect

Article submitted by Kim Fowler,  
Family Child Care Provider

I decided that I would try to do my small part in recycling and was in need of some items for my dramatic play area, so I had a garage sale. I was able to sell a lot of items that the children had lost interest in. I took the money from the sale and went to a second-hand store where I found a red table and two school chairs (see front page) that were perfect for my "little kitchen table." They were far less expensive than buying a new kitchen table set and they were solid as a rock! The quest to get recycled items became a fun experiment for me, so I decided to see what else I could get. I saw an ad on Craigslist (CL) for real preemie clothing and thought that they would be the perfect size for the baby dolls in the dramatic play area, so I purchased them for less than a \$1 a piece. I was on a roll. All I needed was a kitchen.

I decided to "make" a kitchen instead of buying one and came up with this idea. I purchased an old entertainment center on CL for \$20. You may have one of these lying around or a friend may have an old one they can donate. I purchased the following supplies and just used my imagination to adapt my entertainment center into the perfect little play kitchen. Here's what I used:

- Half a piece of plywood as the back of the kitchen (I painted mine yellow)
- Counter - contact paper from Home Depot, \$6
- Faucet - From Home Depot, \$12
- Sink basin - I used an old brownie pan (you could also cut a round opening and use a silver bowl from your cabinet)
- Stove & cabinets - covered in stainless contact paper from Home Depot, \$10
- Burners - I used formula tops spray-painted black
- Knobs - they actually turn! I found an open package at Home Depot and got them for \$7



- Hardware - you can buy whatever you would like or pull it from your workbench, from old cabinets, etc.
  - Mirror "window" - I found it at Salvation Army for \$5
  - Kitchen Supplies - CL \$20 for coffee maker, toaster, waffle maker, cooks-hats, and all kinds of food & utensils!
- I gave the children an old cell phone for their "house phone," put up some touch lights on each side, some hooks for oven mitts, and they were set. I have found that they have really expanded their dramatic play given this new environment. I have seen them giving their baby a "tubby" in the sink, making each other dinner or coffee, and pulling items from the oven.
- I really enjoyed making the project and look forward to finding new ideas for recycling of toys!

## School-Age Conference a Great Day for All

On Monday, October 23, 2008, the 10th Annual School Age Child Care Conference was held at the Best Western Hotel in Albany. Two-hundred school age staff from the Capital District attended the conference. Participants earned six training hours in topics such as brain games for children, stress reduction, social competency, bullying prevention, and strategies for working with children who have special needs. The presenters offered a wealth of information and shared years of experience and knowledge.

Participants were treated to a buffet lunch and had the opportunity to browse through items supplied by vendors. The feedback was very positive, with comments such as, "It was very informative and interactive," and, "I can't wait to return next year!" Another participant shared, "This conference was great, I had a great time!" The Council appreciates everyone who helped organize and make this event a successful one!






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"Young children interacting at computers engage in high levels of spoken communication and

## Playful Learning Environments For Infants and Toddlers

Babies are born ready to explore and respond to sensory experiences. Young children learn best if they can explore their surroundings using all of their senses. It is the privilege of a caregiver to safely and patiently introduce a variety of developmentally appropriate sensory opportunities to babies during these early moments.

We now know that activities involving an infant's brain and rapidly awakening senses are crucial to brain development and the overall growth of a child. Sensory play discoveries made naturally, by confident and curious babies build a foundation for higher levels of thinking. The development of the whole body, not just the brain, is dependent upon sensory-motor learning that provides active direct experiences. Children who make these sensory discoveries in natural sequence enjoy healthy patterns of increasing growth and development.

Best practice suggests caregivers carefully plan environments that reflect the individual needs and interests of the babies in their care. Child care environments should be filled with sensory rich opportunities that are available to children of all ages throughout the day. Effort must be spent on avoiding an over-stimulating environment for infants, toddlers and their caregivers. Spaces should be framed with calm, subtle wall and floor coverings, allowing color to brighten the room through materials, windows, the children themselves, and their art work.

Just as much attention needs to be given to the concept that the caregiver herself is part of the environment; perhaps one of the first environments a baby experiences. Gentle, watchful, responsive care, given by the same few favorite faces, encourages young babies to explore their environment in ever-expanding directions, while always turning back to be reassured by the approving gaze, smile, or words from their caregiver.

### TOUCH

- Toddlers enjoy finger-tracing shapes or letters cut out of sand-paper or all forms of edible play doh.
- Pre-schoolers squeal as brightly colored corn starch "goop" drips through their fingers.

### SCENT AND TASTE

Driven by their openness to different tastes and textures, young children will put just about anything in their mouths. In time, meals become a wonderful opportunity to introduce the crunch of a Cheerio or the sweetness of apple-sauce. Thousands of tiny taste buds, and teeth waiting to break through gums make chewing, tasting, and licking a rewarding way to explore. This preference is also what makes a supportive environment and supervision of young children who are using their mouths as a second set of eyes, so important.

### HEARING

- Exchanging a "goo!" encourages infants to explore the volume and sound of their voice.
- Home made noise makers are fun for toddlers to experiment with.
- Exploring silly rhyming words and singing songs with children of all ages encourages the development of language skills.

### VISION

- Have babies watch as caregivers place exciting toys just out of reach during floor time to encourage little bodies to move, touch, and grasp.
- Give toddlers pretty-colored, airy scarves and make up a dance to go along with different kinds of music.
- Dim the lights and have pre-schoolers put on a flash-light dance while lying on their backs on the floor.

Developmentally appropriate sensory play has few rules to follow and the possibilities are endless. Encourage little ones to tell you what they know about their world by using their eyes, ears, noses, tongues, and fingers every day.

#### Resources:

*How Children Develop Sensory Awareness*, by DR. Alice Honig, PH.D., *Scholastic Early Childhood Today*, Feb. 2001  
*Sensory Play-Part 1- What is Sensory Play?*  
*/Play activities.com 4/1/2008*

## Council Honored by Human Resource Association

Diversity is about learning from others who are not the same and about dignity and respect for all. The Capital District Child Care Council has long embraced diversity in the workplace by making it a priority in their employment practices. This commitment extends beyond employing bilingual staff members, who comprise 9% of the staff, to recruiting a staff and Board of Directors of diverse ages, cultures and backgrounds. This mix of talented people has not only enriched our working environment, making it a great place to work, but has contributed to the success of our agency by strengthening the relationship with the diverse communities that we serve.

To recognize our commitment to creating a diverse workplace, the Child Care Council was honored as one of the top five recipients of the Capital Region Human Resource Association's (CRHRA) *Spectrum Award*. "The award, presented at the CRHRA 'Celebration of Workplace Diversity' Gala on October 16, 2008, is a symbol of the Council's continued efforts to create a respectful and open working environment where all employees have the opportunity to take a leadership role and have a voice in the decision making process," said Patricia Skinner, Executive Director of the Child Care Council. "We take great pride in cultivating an atmosphere of dignity and respect among our employees, and I am proud to work with such dedicated people. We feel very honored and privileged to have received this distinction."

## Mini-Conference to be Held in Johnstown March 28, Save the Date!

A child care conference will take place on Saturday, March 28, 2009 at the Holiday Inn in Johnstown. The conference is open to all child care center staff, school-age program staff, family child care providers, and group/family child care providers. Participants will have the opportunity to earn six hours of training. The conference will also include lunch, a vendor area, and door prizes.

Invitations will be mailed at the end of February. For more information, please call 518 426-7181.

# Missed the Workshop? That's OK...Borrow the Book

If you are a family child care provider who had other plans on Columbus Day and missed the "Active Play" workshop presented by Diane Craft, PhD and sponsored by Schenectady County Cornell Cooperative Extension, you missed a great event! This was six hours packed full of easy, low-cost activities that child care providers can do with groups of multi-age children in whatever space they have available.



The providers who came to this workshop left inspired and energized to use Diane's ideas about incorporating structured physical activity into the child care day.

There is good news for anyone who missed this workshop, and are interested in learning new ideas for getting their children active. Diane Craft's new book, Active Play: Fun Physical Activities for Young Children, is now available. The book comes with a DVD showing Diane engaging in the activities in family child care homes. Watching the DVD makes it easy to see how to do the activities with your own group of children. There are 52 fun

indoor and outdoor activities for toddlers, preschoolers, and school-aged children. The children will have fun while becoming more physically fit...they may even take a better nap after all this physical activity!

The Child Care Council has several copies of the book and DVD available for loan in the Toy Lending Library. Or, the book can be ordered by sending \$35 plus 8% sales tax and \$4 for postage and handling to **Diane Craft, 10 Wheeler Avenue, Cortland, NY 12305. Make the check payable to Diane H. Craft. Do not send orders to the Child Care Council.**

## 4th Annual Family Child Care Mini-Conference

The 4th Annual Family Child Care Mini-Conference was once again held at the Courtyard by Marriot in Saratoga Springs, in November, 2008. Professor Nancy Cupolo, from Hudson Valley Community College, was the Keynote Presenter. Nancy's presentation, "The Latest in Brain Research: Implications for Learning," focused on how caregivers can turn research on brain development into practical activities and strategies for learning. The Council thanks Debbie Engel, Kristina Guernsey and Janet Irwin who also presented workshops and shared information about their programs.

Hope to see you next year!

## Why Family Child Care Providers Should Love Form 8829

The tax code is complex and sometimes incomprehensible. Attend this hands-on workshop to understand two of the most important forms that group/family providers use when filing taxes. This workshop is scheduled for Saturday January 31, 2009, 9:30 - 11:30 am at the Council's Training Center, 319 Broadway, Menands. The cost of the workshop is \$49 (\$39 for Council members) and includes the 2008 Family Child Care Tax Workbook and Organizer.

For more information call Anne or Arlene at 426-7181 x317 or x343.



## Capital District Child Care Council

518 426-7181 [www.cdcccc.org](http://www.cdcccc.org)  
91 Broadway, Menands, NY 12204

### Mission

The Capital District Child Care Council is a resource and referral agency dedicated to promoting quality, accessible child care for all of the Capital Region's diverse communities. The Council assumes a leadership role in supporting children, parents, child care professionals, and employers through referral counseling, education, training, and advocacy.

### Board of Directors

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## Council Project Featured in National Newsletter

*The following article originally appeared in the DECI (Devereux Early Childhood Initiative) Quarterly Newsletter: Fall 2008.*

Three years ago a project was created that would enhance social emotional development and literacy for children embarking on their educational journey. Having successfully used DECA in previous projects, the Capital District Child Care Council was confident that best practices in early literacy and social emotional development could be bridged. This endeavor was met with passion and determination to ensure that best practices in early care and education were addressed. After many round table discussions, BELL (Building Emotional Learning and Literacy) was founded.

BELL is a project that is part of a larger community initiative called Literacy Education and Parent Engagement (LEAPE), funded by the United Way of the Greater Capital Region. BELL provides technical assistance to early childhood educators in not-for-profit programs in Schenectady. The teachers attend monthly meetings to learn strategies designed to support social emotional wellness and literacy. The meetings are also an opportunity to share ideas and learn from each other.

BELL has several components consisting of training, support groups, and assessment. The program begins with assessment using the *DECA Reflective Checklist* and the *Get Ready to Read Literacy Environment Checklist*. Goals for each classroom are then planned based

on these observation results. One goal was for each classroom to develop writing centers to support social emotional development and literacy. Support group time was used to train on the components of literacy and their relationship to attachment, initiative, and self-control. Time was also used for the teachers to create materials for the writing centers. The teachers then implemented the newly learned strategies in the classroom. The teachers made writing materials accessible to children and encouraged them to problem solve, expand their vocabulary, learn the value of print, and express their feelings through creative play. For example, one classroom acquired old perforated edge computer paper. The children in the classroom spent the morning working together to brainstorm ideas on how to use the perforated edges of the paper. The children discovered that the edges could be pulled off and be used as ribbon to wrap around their drawings to present as a gift. During this activity, the bridge between literacy and social emotional development was evident.

BELL has been a valuable resource to the participating programs. Each year significant growth has been made because dedicated teachers come together to learn new strategies. The impact is widespread; benefitting teachers, the overall atmosphere of the classrooms, and most importantly, each individual child.  
*By Sheri Dushane, Center Education Coordinator and Karen Tarullo, Social Emotional Development Coordinator*

## Born Learning Project to Offer Free Workshops

In October 2008, the Child Care Council received a grant from the United Way of the Greater Capital Region to implement the Born Learning Project. The vision for the Born Learning Project is that children will develop and learn supported by strong families and caregivers, in healthy, nurturing, and safe environments. The Council's goal is that the Born Learning initiative will serve as a catalyst for community resources to ensure that young children have opportunities for quality early learning.

In order to fulfill this goal there will be ten workshops held on various early childhood topics for families and caregivers of

**6** the Mont Pleasant neighborhood in

Schenectady. These workshops will be full of great information as well as serve as a support to the participants and their children. Each participant who attends will receive a tool-kit that contains parent information, arts and crafts activities, and literacy materials. Participants will enjoy a light meal and child care will be provided during the workshops. Additionally, anyone who is interested in providing child care in their home or who is already providing legally exempt care in their home can receive information and support to become a New York State registered child care provider. For more information on the Born Learning Project, please call Lori Edwards 426-7181 ext. 345.

## Get The Picture!

The 2008 "Picture of Child Care in the Capital District" will be available March 1. Get your free copy by calling 518 426-7181.

The "Picture of Child Care" is a comprehensive analysis of the supply and demand, average cost, and shortage/surplus of child care; as well as the wages and benefits of child care providers in the Capital Region.

## Directors' Retreat

On November 4, 2008 the Directors' Retreat was revived thanks to the support and guidance of the Six County Directors' Club. There were 33 directors from all over the Capital Region in attendance at the Retreat at the Ramada Albany Airport hotel in Latham.

The day began with Lynn Streifert, the Director for the Children with Special Needs Program of Schenectady County. She gave a very thorough explanation of both the Early Intervention Process and the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE).

After the lunch break the Directors gathered for a round-table discussion with Janice Molnar, Deputy Commissioner of the Division of Child Care Services at the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and Linda Sornberger, Albany Regional Manager for the Division of Child Care Services at OCFS. Janice and Linda spoke about the new vision of OCFS regarding Early Childhood Education and about the new Quality Rating Improvement System. Following their presentation, the floor was opened to questions from the audience.

The day ended with Lynn Siebert, School-Age Education Coordinator at the Child Care Council, challenging the Directors to view their employees through a different lens. Lynn talked about how different generations of workers view the workplace. Lynn showed the Directors different tools to use at staff meetings to gain a deeper understanding of generational personality traits.

If you are interested in becoming involved with the Directors' Club, the next meeting is January 13, 2009; 1:30-3:00 at 319 Broadway, Menands. Plan to join us at next year's Directors' Retreat!

## 2009 Toy Lending Library Schedule

The Toy Lending Library will re-open after its annual inventory on Tuesday, January 20, 2009. The Library will be open daily from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm. The Library will also be open the following Wednesday evenings each month from 5:00 – 7:00 pm:

Wednesday, January 21  
 Wednesday, February 18  
 Wednesday, March 18  
 Wednesday, April 15  
 Wednesday, May 13  
 Wednesday, June 10  
 Wednesday, July 8  
 Wednesday, August 5  
 Wednesday, September 2  
 Wednesday, September 30  
 Wednesday, October 28 (Returns only)

If you have any questions please call Gail Williams @ 426-7181 ext. 310.

*Check this out!*

## Certified Playground Safety Inspector

The National Association for the Education for Young Children (NAEYC) has a new criterion for those seeking accreditation. Programs will need to show documentation of an inspection by a certified playground inspector. Child care centers seeking accreditation are striving to reach best practice within their programs. To support programs in this process the Child Care Council has a Certified Playground Inspector, Heather Sweet, to assist programs in meeting this criterion. For more information please contact Heather at 426-7181 ext.347.



# Gentle Reminders Helpful Tips

## January

NATIONAL SOUP MONTH  
 INTERNATIONAL CREATIVITY MONTH  
 NATIONAL STAMP COLLECTORS MONTH  
 8 NATIONAL SHOW AND TELL DAY  
 21 TOY LENDING LIBRARY OPEN 5 - 7 PM  
 28 BUBBLE WRAP APPRECIATION DAY

## March

NATIONAL UMBRELLA MONTH  
 NATIONAL KITE MONTH  
 6 LEARN WHAT YOUR NAME MEANS DAY  
 15 ABSOLUTELY INCREDIBLE KID DAY  
 18 TOY LENDING LIBRARY OPEN 5 - 7 PM

## February

SWEET POTATO MONTH  
 LIBRARY LOVER'S MONTH  
 7 GIRLS AND WOMEN IN SPORTS DAY  
 16 EARLY CHILDHOOD CONFERENCE  
 18 TOY LENDING LIBRARY OPEN 5 - 7 PM



### INDOORS

✓ During these busy winter months, sometimes after school programs are asked to use alternative spaces. If this happens in your program, remember to use rooms that have been pre-approved by your registrar. The temperature of the rooms must be kept at a minimum temperature of 68 degrees F. Keep in mind that portable heaters are a safety concern and are not permitted. 414.5 (c)

✓ In the cold and flu season it is even more important than ever to remember basic health practices. Staff must wash their hands at the beginning of each day, before and after administering medication, when they are dirty, after using the toilet, before and after handling food or pets, after coming in contact with bodily secretions, and when coming in from the outdoors. 414.11 (h)

✓ Children that have developed a level of illness that is not accommodated in a provider's approved health care plan, need to be provided with a quiet place to rest that is still in direct and competent supervision of staff until given care by a health care provider or removed from the program. When children develop any symptoms of illness, providers must immediately notify parents or guardians. 414.11 (f)

### OUTDOORS

✓ Winter is here, and that means snow, snow, snow! Keep in mind that all exits and sidewalks need to remain clear of snow and ice. 414.5 (a). Children love everything about snow...building snowmen, sledding, and making snow angels. Remember...when you're outside, it's still possible to get a sunburn in the winter. With written instructions from parents or guardians, providers can apply sunscreen. 414.11 (a) (12)

### Get Yours Today...

If you are interested in purchasing a 2009 RedLeaf Calendar Keeper to keep track of all of your business expenses and your attendance, the Family Child Care 2009 Calendar-Keeper is the tool for you. Pick one up for \$10 by stopping by our Menands office, or you can order one by sending a check or money order in the amount of \$14.80 (for postage) to: Child Care Council, 91 Broadway, Menands, NY 12204, Attention: Calendar-Keeper.

### Looking Ahead...

APRIL TV Turn Off Week, April 20 - 26

MAY Child Care Provider Appreciation Dinner

JUNE National Dairy Month...Got Milk?



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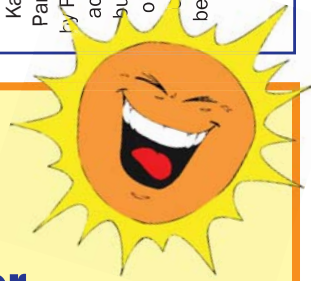


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It or  
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**Summer  
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