

Chatham Child Care News

Monthly Newsletter

May 2002

Getting In The Reading Habit

A child care provider sits down to read with a baby and about a million good connections instantly occur. Inside that baby's brain, neurons excite, helping to form critical synapses that will serve the baby throughout life. The provider, in turn, learns about the baby's temperament and is forming an essential bond with the child in her care.

Reading with babies and small children is not always as easy a task as it might be with an older child. But, with the newest research proving the huge importance of reading with children from day one, it is definitely something parents and providers should try and to do every day. You will soon find that the ritual becomes as enjoyable for you as it is for the baby or child.

Not that long ago, people believed that babies didn't really think or need conversation until they learned to speak. Now we know that babies prefer the voices of their parents and caregivers over any sound in the world. Though babies cannot understand the words, the things that you say are fascinating and the sound of your voice is soothing. Research shows that a language-rich environment stimulates babies' brains and makes them receptive to language and relationships and able to enjoy them both earlier. Parents and caregivers can read or talk to babies in different languages with no ill effects – in fact, studies show that dual language stimulates little brains even more.

You can sit an infant in front of a television for an entire year and she will not learn language. Direct *engagement* with the baby is what makes all the difference, whether it's talking, singing or reading. There is no reason for an infant to ever watch television shows or videos, even those that are supposedly designed specifically for babies. They can get all the language stimulation they need from the world around them. Look at a baby and narrate what's going on: *"We are going outside now to see what the weather is like." "I'm getting hungry, let's have lunch." "Do you see Alex playing ball in the yard?"*

Let babies touch, watch, chew on, and turn pages of a sturdy book. Tiny babies need only to hear one or two pages of a baby book at a time. When a baby turns his head away from the book, he is telling you he has had enough. Never force a fussy baby to listen to an entire story. Focus on the warm, nurturing bond and the enjoyment of language, not the completion of a tale. Use books with bold, clear illustrations and few words.

Wordless books are great for making up your own stories, and you can change the story each time. Board books work well even when babies chew on the pages – it's part of how they learn about them. But remember, *what* you read is not as important as the time spent reading and cuddling together.

Toddlers and preschoolers can usually sit through a book, so establish a daily routine. Keep the event special – a favorite chair, a song to introduce reading time, a favorite book read at every storytime. Sometimes while in the bathtub, where they're less likely to wander! Don't expect every 2-4 year old to be riveted to a book you have chosen, but there are some especially fascinating books for this age. You'll need to be prepared to read books again and again without complaint.

CELEBRATE PROVIDER APPRECIATION DAY AT CHILD CARE NETWORKS!

**Friday May 10
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon
117 East Salisbury Street in Pittsboro**

Child Care Networks invites child care providers from all centers and homes in Chatham County to bring your children and celebrate Provider Appreciation Day with us. There will be games and snacks for the children, and gifts to show our appreciation for you.

In order to prepare the right amount of food, we need to know that you're coming and how many children you're bringing. Please call Sue Brooks at 542-6644 extension 10 by May 7 to sign up.

For toddlers and preschoolers, find short, simple books that accurately reflect their world. Toddlers like books with a repeating refrain or rhyming sounds.

Preschoolers enjoy books that address themes like other children's adventures animals, vehicles, magic and family. Some preschoolers will get hooked on a topic and want to read every book about that one thing. That's okay! Find every book about dinosaurs at the library and read them all.

Children have fantastic stories of their own. Older preschoolers can weave magnificent tales. Write them down and make little books of their stories, using their own illustrations. You can include their books in your story times along with library books and your own collection.

The local library is one of the most valuable community resources for reading and language development, with an almost never-ending supply of books that will extend far beyond your personal library. Many libraries offer storytimes for different ages, a great supplement to your own reading, complete with fingerplays and props. Child care providers can take field trips to the branch library with toddlers and preschoolers.

The brain connections made in children's early years are reinforced by repeated use and continue if we keep reading and encourage children who want to read. Reading brings the world closer to every child. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, reading is the single most important intervention for developing a child's literacy skills. Your job as a parent or caregiver is to provide variety, diversity and quality, and the place and time to enjoy books together.

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FOCUS ON CHILD CARE CONFERENCE 2002

This year's Focus on Child Care Conference will be held on Saturday June 9 at CCCC in Pittsboro. The hours will be 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. As you know if you have attended before, this is a day full of training, gifts, and good food. It is planned for Chatham County child care workers by the Focus on Child Care committee, which includes representatives from the Chatham County Partnership for Children, Child Care Networks, child care providers, and other child care professionals. The agenda for the conference is still being finalized, and the committee is using your feedback from last year's conference to provide topics you want to learn about. Because of cuts in state funding, there will be a fee of \$10.00 each for Chatham County participants, and \$35.00 for people from other counties. Watch for registration information from the Partnership!

Subsidy News
New Subsidy Allocation

On Monday, April 8, 2002, Child Care Networks, Inc. received notification from the Division of Child Development that we would receive an additional \$50,000 in subsidy funds to be spent in this fiscal year. The last service month in the fiscal year is May, so this money can only be used to pay for care provided between now and May 31.

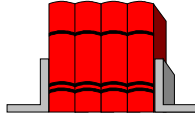
On Tuesday, April 9, 2002, we began contacting 60 families (86 children) from our waiting list. Calls were made and letters were mailed. These families were instructed to contact Child Care Networks, Inc. no later than April 30 so they could schedule an appointment. The letters explain eligibility guidelines and subsidy requirements. There are income eligibility forms and subsidy intake forms which should be completed and brought to CCN when families come in for their appointments. If you have any families in your program who are on our waiting list, please encourage them to respond promptly if they received a letter from us. If we do not hear from these families, their names will be removed from the waiting list. If they call after April 30, they will have to be added back at the bottom of the waiting list.

As we explained in the December 2001 newsletter, employment is the top priority for the waiting list. This new \$50,000 allocation has allowed us to contact all families needing child care to support employment and who were placed on the waiting list before March 1, 2002. Depending on the response from the 60 families we just contacted, we may be able to remove a few more names from the waiting list in May. Please help us by stressing to the parents that we need to have up to date addresses in order for us to reach them when their name comes up on the waiting list. If you have questions related to the waiting list you are welcome to contact anyone on the Family Services Team (Subsidy) at Child Care Networks, Inc.

We do not yet know what our subsidy allocation for the next fiscal year will be. Based on current estimates it appears that we will have enough money to continue payments for our existing cases and for those we are currently removing from the waiting list. However, this \$50,000 did not allow us to completely eliminate the waiting list. It continues to grow every day, and we may not be able to remove large numbers of families from the waiting list again in the near future.

Connie McAdams

**CHILD CARE NETWORKS RESOURCE LIBRARY
FEATURE OF THE MONTH**



**This month's feature:
THE LION WHO HAD ASTHMA
By Jonathan London**

This book is based on a true story of a mother and father whose son was born with asthma. The character in the book, Sean, is the author's real son's name and the lion is his mother. The book helps children understand about asthma, and encourages them to use their imagination to breathe deeply and relax, which helps open their airways.

Our Resource Library is available to Chatham County child care providers. To check out items, call Brenda Foxx at 542-6644, extension 16 or Marilyn Grubbs at extension 21. We may be able to deliver items if you have trouble coming to pick them up.

Items in the Resource Library were purchased with funding from the Chatham County Partnership for Children.



CPR AND FIRST AID



CPR or First Aid classes are taught by Sue Morrow, RN, monthly at Child Care Networks. Here is the upcoming schedule:

- June 10 CPR \$22*
- July 2 First Aid \$15
- August 6 CPR \$22
- September 24 First Aid \$15

**Classes are \$3 each for programs currently on contract to upgrade their quality. Funding for this reduced fee is provided through Chatham County Partnership for Children.*

All classes begin at 6:00 p.m. at our office, 117 E. Salisbury Street in Pittsboro. **Call Brenda Foxx to register for classes. Register early, since classes fill up quickly.**



In addition to the training listed here, we have information about workshops in nearby counties sponsored by other agencies. Call Marilyn Grubbs at 542-6644, extension 21 for this information.

Preschool Outreach Program Presents... 2002 Child Care Provider Workshop Series

May 8: Brain Development Presenters: Rosemary McCarthy-Mareka, Orange Co. PACT Program & Jennifer Rotella, Preschool Outreach Program

June 5: Enhancing Play Skills in Preschoolers

Presenters: Jennifer Rotella, Preschool Outreach Program & Jean Whicker, KidSCOPE Program

Training credits available!

To register: Call Jennifer Rotella at 542-4422 one week prior to each workshop

What time? 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. for each session

Where? Central Carolina Community College, Pittsboro; Conference Room, Building One

Food Program Workshop Announced

Child Care Networks and the Orange County Cooperative Extension Service will present the "Color Me Healthy" workshop on May 22, 2002. The presentation will be held at the Cooperative Extension Building at 306 E. Revere Rd. in Hillsborough between 6:00 PM and 9:00 PM. Each participant will receive a kit of age appropriate materials for use in their child care programs. Registration is required and may be done by calling Marianne at 967-5034. Three hours of training credit will be issued for participating in this workshop. The class size is limited to thirty participants, so please register early.



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CHATHAM CHILD CARE NEWS is a resource publication for caregivers, parents, and other persons interested in child care. It is published monthly by Child Care Networks. Suggestions, information, and articles are welcomed and printed as space permits. Mail information to:

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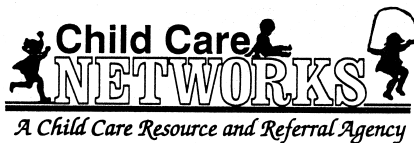
or call (919) 542-6644, extension 21.

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