



Changes to County Child Care Code

The Board of Supervisors recently approved changes to the ordinance that regulates family child care homes in Fairfax County.

Family child care providers who have a Fairfax County permit can now give prescription and non-prescription medication to children in their care if they have passed the required medication administration training course.

This course must be retaken every three years. Providers who choose not to give medication to children in their care are not required to take the course.

The other ordinance change relates to national criminal background checks.

When a county resident applies for a family child care permit, OFC requires a state criminal background check on every adult who lives in the home where child care will be provided. If the state background check indicates that one of the adults has a criminal record in another state, that person must now consent to, and pay for, a national criminal background check.

“These two changes to the county code will help enhance the health and safety of children in child care,” said OFC Director **Anne-Marie Twohie**.



(Left to right) Lynn Hotchkiss, Teena Alfaro, Michelle Diggs, Timothy Bratcher, Marcus Ferguson, and Marcus' daughter Madison. Not pictured: Latoya Dunkley, Donald Easley, Paul Smith and Carolyn Staats.

SACC Grads

The latest cohort of School Age Child Care staff completed the Office for Children's 138-hour school-age credential program.

The SACC credential is part of a comprehensive system developed to promote quality services for children and families and support the professional growth and expertise of SACC staff. Cohort members participated in training related to six core competency areas: child and youth development; families and communities; curriculum; program administration; professional development; and health, safety and accountability.

National Exposure for ECCC

Ruth Stover is the assistant director of the Employees' Child Care Center, which provides child care for children of county employees. Recently, **Stover** was a panelist at the National Association for the Education of Young Children's annual professional development conference, which was held in Rhode Island. Child care professionals from all over the country attended the event.

The panel discussed "Supporting Teachers at All Levels to Teach Effectively, Intentionally, and Responsively: Sharing Real-World Experiences in Implementing a Comprehensive, Detailed Curriculum."



Ruth Stover (2nd from right) with fellow panelists.



SACC Summer Fun



Children enjoy a variety of engaging outdoor and indoor activities while attending Camp Discovery, SACC's summer program. The curriculum is designed to offer hands-on skill-building experiences for children in kindergarten through sixth grade.

Saudi Guests Visit ECCC

The Office for Children's Employees' Child Care Center has become a popular destination for child care professionals from around the world. A number of international guests have visited the ECCC to see best practices of the child care profession in action.

The latest round of long-distance visitors were from Saudi Arabia. Aljouharah Alajaji is starting a non-governmental organization for early childhood development, and Monirah Al-Qunaibit is affiliated with Princess Noura University. They were accompanied by Carol Bellamy from Teaching Strategies, Inc.



Head Start Receives Award

The Higher Horizons Day Care Center presented their 2011 Partnership Award to the Fairfax County Office for Children at a special partnership recognition event in Springfield. OFC Head Start Director **Jennifer Branch** accepted the award, which was for "continued support of the community-based early care and education program at Higher Horizons."



"Community partners are essential to the success of our non-profit," said Higher Horizons Board Chairman Ethel Cross. "Collaborating affords avenues to achieve common goals, improve, maximize and share services, and avoid duplication of services in the community. We rely on our partners for successful program implementation."

Other community partners recognized at the event were the Infant and Toddler Connection of Fairfax-Falls Church, the George Mason University School of Nursing, and Northern Virginia Community College.

Higher Horizons offers Head Start and Early Head Start services to families with low incomes in the Bailey's Crossroads community.

WORD POWER

Most of us learned our first language through stories, songs and games, and by repeating the names of familiar people, places and things. This summer, 30 child care professionals enhanced their English skills in a similar way in a new course called “Word Power: Increasing English Vocabulary Through the “Early Learning Guidelines.”

Karen Quist, the director of the Office for Children’s Institute for Early Learning, developed the course in partnership with OFC’s Early Head Start and Child Care Assistance and Referral programs. The eight-week course was unique in that attendees learned child development activities and related English words and concepts at the same time. One of OFC’s training instructors, **Marshann Snyder**, and an English Language Learner consultant, Annice van der Sluis, assisted **Quist** in teaching the course.

OFC staff **Jennifer Branch, Carol Keil, Susan Goettl, Karle Finley, Susan Hansell-Davis, Tina Lee, Carol Osborn, Chris Scibetta, Asria Rafiqzad, Ruth Stover, Duan Boonma, Keo Zelaya, Bronwyn Dean** and **Kristen Nicklas** served as conversation mentors who practiced with the attendees to help them strengthen their skill and confidence in speaking English.

“Learning a language through memorization drills can be a slow, stressful process,” **Quist** explained. “This course allowed participants to enhance their English speaking and comprehension abilities in a very natural way through fun, hands-on activities that they can use in their everyday work with children.”

Participants also benefitted from information presented by staff from the Regional Literacy Council and Northern Virginia Community College.

This course is supported by the Early Head Start/Child Care Assistance and Referral demonstration project.

O F C Office for Children

This employee newsletter is published by the Office for Children, a division of the Fairfax County Dept. of Family Services. If you have any questions, contact Lois Kirkpatrick at 703-324-7162 or Nancy McDonough at 703-324-8042. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc.



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