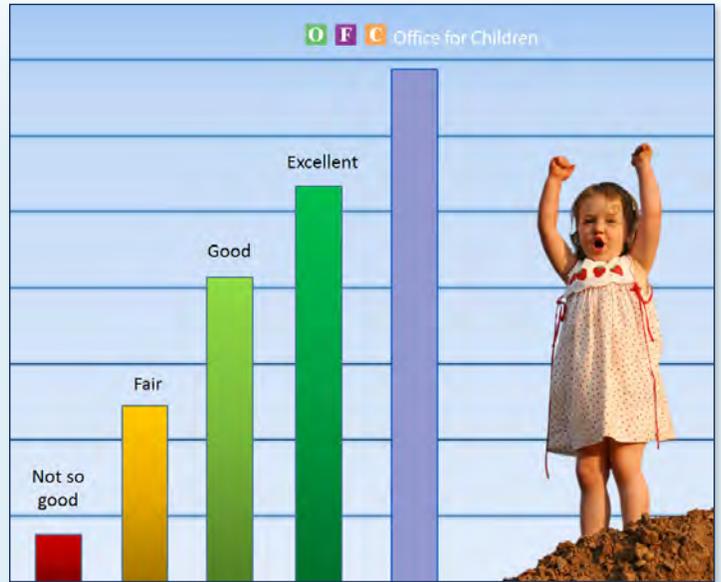


## OFC Measures Up



Department of Family Services Director **Nannette Bowler** has asked DFS senior staff to brief employees on the performance data that's reported to the public during the budget season each year. Office for Children Director **Anne-Marie Twohie**, and OFC's Manager of Marketing and Strategic Analysis **Lois Kirkpatrick**, have been visiting OFC program staff meetings to discuss OFC's performance measures.

Performance measurement is a process county agencies use to determine where are we now, where we want to be, how we get there, and how we measure our success. Agencies are required to measure performance to show taxpayers and stakeholders what we do, how efficiently we do it, and how residents are helped by our efforts.

OFC's performance measures show that we're doing a great job, as evidenced by the responses to our customer satisfaction surveys. At least 97 percent of OFC survey respondents are satisfied with our programs.

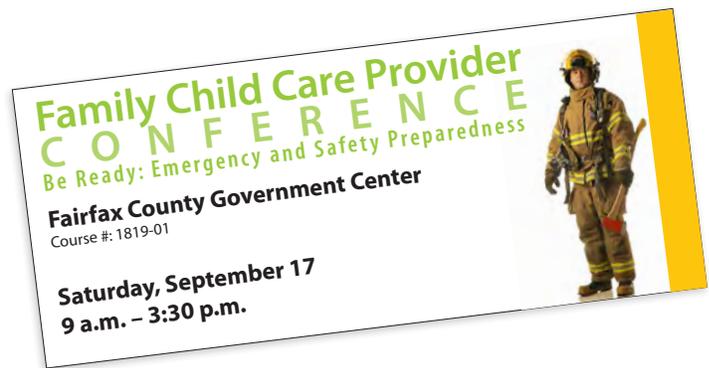
OFC's goal moving forward is to continue efforts to provide quality services efficiently and effectively for the community.

# CEPS Conference

On September 17, the Office for Children’s Community Education and Provider Services program will host “Be Ready: Emergency and Safety Preparedness,” a day-long conference for family child care providers that will be held at the Fairfax County Government Center.

The conference will feature six sessions presented by subject matter experts from various county agencies.

- Wyleng Liew, a life safety education specialist with the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, will present “Home Fire Safety.”
- Wayne Twombly, a crime prevention officer with the Fairfax County Police Department, will present “Planning and Staying Safe in Your Home.”
- Marc Barbieri, the emergency management coordinator for the Fairfax County Health Department, and Macelo Ferreira, a community liaison with the Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management, will present “How Prepared Are You?”
- Dave McKernan, coordinator of the Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management, will present “Are You Prepared to Survive?”



- Karen Scudder, a DFS Healthy Families social worker, will present “Building Resiliency: How to Have ‘Bounce Back’ Kids.”
- Kim Lamon-Loperfido, a prevention specialist with the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board, will present “Stress Management Before, During and After Emergencies.”

“This is the first time CEPS has offered an emergency preparedness conference with this depth of subject-matter expertise. We’re excited that we’ll be able to give family child care providers critical information that will help them keep children, themselves and their families safe,” said CEPS Director **Catherine Sauer**.



## Four Stars

Two Office for Children programs – the Gum Springs Children’s Center and the Employees’ Child Care Center – have participated in the Virginia Star Quality Initiative, and each has received four stars for the quality of their programs. Fifty percent of programs evaluated by VSQI have received three stars, and none have received more than four.

VSQI was created to provide a consistent way to distinguish the level of quality in child care programs, so that parents can make informed choices for their children. VSQI is also designed to enhance program quality. Participation in the assessment is voluntary. When evaluated, each child care program is given a rating of one to five stars, similar to what is done with restaurants and hotels.

VSQI raters review four quality features:

- The education, qualifications and training of staff,
- Interactions between teachers and children,
- Class size and structure of classrooms,
- Environment and instruction.

After receiving a rating, program staff meet with a Star Quality mentor to develop and implement a quality improvement plan.

“We’re very pleased that OFC’s Head Start program, the ECCC and other community programs have participated in VSQI, which is an important strategy for supporting quality child care in our community,” says OFC Director **Anne-Marie Twohie**.



# Healing Racism

Starting this month, 60 Office for Children employees will participate in the Department of Family Services' Healing Racism Institute. The institute was piloted by senior staff and managers this spring, and will continue for several years so that all DFS employees can participate.

The institute begins with a workshop exploring racism in the U.S. Participants then meet in discussion groups over several weeks. Two OFC staff, **Tina Lee** and **Kevin Mathews**, are part of DFS' Healing Racism facilitation team.

**Lee** is a child care specialist with the Virginia Preschool Initiative who served on OFC's diversity initiative for six years. "It's important to know the history of racism and how it affects the people we serve," she said.

**Mathews** is a School Age Child Care program administrator who has presented diversity workshops to SACC staff for more than 10 years. "Knowing peoples' experiences helps us learn and grow," **Mathews** said.



Another cohort of OFC employees will have the opportunity to participate in the Healing Racism Institute in October.

# National Dance Day



The Office for Children recently joined others around the world in dancing for health. Nuclear physicists in Switzerland, deaf hip hoppers in Singapore, adults in assisted living facilities, surprised wedding guests, and thousands of other "movers and shakers" participated in National Dance Day 2011.

Last year National Dance Day was launched by Nigel Lythgoe, executive producer and judge of the TV show "So You Think You Can Dance." Recognized by congress after a resolution introduced by DC Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, National Dance Day is held annually to promote dance as a fun way for people of all ages to reduce the risk of heart disease and combat obesity while having fun.

OFC helps prevent childhood obesity through our work with the local child care community. This includes providing

courses and workshops on health and nutrition, and administering the USDA Food Program for child care professionals.

"OFC encourages child care professionals to offer children nutritious meals and snacks, along with providing children indoor and outdoor activities that allow them to get up and move," says OFC Director **Anne-Marie Twohie**. "By participating in National Dance Day, children enrolled in child care programs had a fun and healthy experience."

National Dance Day participants were encouraged to videotape their activities and post them online. OFC's three-minute video features children enrolled in the School Age Child Care program and the Employees' Child Care Center, and OFC staff. The video can be viewed on Facebook using a home computer or smartphone at: [www.facebook.com/FairfaxCountyOfficeforChildren](http://www.facebook.com/FairfaxCountyOfficeforChildren).

# SACC Partners With The Peace Corps

This year's School Age Child Care curriculum will allow children to explore cultures from around the world, as well as the heritage and traditions of their own families. This opportunity will be enhanced by a new partnership between SACC and the Peace Corps.

SACC centers will be matched with Peace Corps volunteers currently serving in other countries. The volunteers will share their experiences and adventures with children throughout the school year through calls, letters, pictures, emails and videos. Each center will also be visited in person by a Peace Corps volunteer.

SACC centers will focus on the interests and ancestry of the children at their centers, and explore world cultures through educational resources offered by the Peace Corps' Coverdell World Wise Schools program.



Courtesy of the Peace Corps

"We're fortunate to live in such a culturally-rich area, with so many families from fascinating places. This year's curriculum is going to help connect children to people and cultures in our own community and around the world through live, hands-on experiences," said SACC Director **Anne Goldstein**.

## Head Start's Summer Swimming Program



Children enrolled in the Greater Mt. Vernon Community Head Start program participated in its annual five-week swimming program this summer. Swimming lessons were held three times each week at the Mt. Vernon REC center. Parents were able to join in the fun by accompanying their children to the pool.