

## New Supervisor Training Supports SACC Quality and Leadership

SACC's New Supervisor Training Series was created to support, assist and mentor recently promoted center supervisors and head teachers in their new leadership roles. Since 2010, nearly 40 staff have completed the comprehensive training series which supports staff in providing an outstanding program and services that meet the needs of the children, families and communities. Trainings held throughout the school year have covered various competency areas and skill building topics such as child and youth development, strategies for problem solving and an introduction to and exploration of community resources. One of the highlights of this year's training was



incorporating the lessons learned from previous cohort participants who returned to share their experiences with the new group of supervisors. A new cohort will be formed for the 2012 - 2013 school year.

## CEPS Hosts Annual Nutrition Fairs



The theme for this year's Food and Nutrition Fairs was "Get Your Plate in Shape." It reinforced the importance of making informed choices and developing good eating and physical activity habits.

The Food and Nutrition Fair was hosted twice in March for child care providers and on March 22 for employees at the Pennino building by registered dietitians **Abeba Tzeggai**, **Kamini Jassal**, **Maria Elena Martinez** and **Eveludis Lopez** from Office for Children, **Maria Loh** and **Debra Ofarrel** from Head Start and Saroj Khurana from Virginia Cooperative Extension. The fair incorporated activities and information booths that taught and demonstrated ways to practice healthy food choices, lifestyles, and cooking techniques.

By using the "MyPlate" eating guide based on 2010 American Dietary Guidelines, participants learned how to build healthy plates and familiarized themselves with the new dietary guidelines. They also learned about Super Tracker, an online tool that creates personalized nutrition and activity plans at [www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov).

Employee Fitness and Wellness Center staff led activities such as Hip Hop, Yoga, and Zumba throughout the day to show the health benefits of being physically active.

Participants also had opportunities to observe food demos, get recipes and sample ingredients that help increase the variety of protein food choices such as fresh black bean hummus, red beans and brown rice.



## Ready, Set, Kindergarten!

This fall, an estimated 13,000 children in Fairfax County will be starting their elementary school experience as they transition from home, preschool or a child care setting to kindergarten. On May 2, Office for Children Director **Anne-Marie Twohie**, and Fairfax County Public Schools Early Childhood Coordinator Maura Burke, participated in “Ask Fairfax!” a public online discussion that addressed what families, child care programs and teachers can do to ensure a smooth transition to kindergarten.

To help familiarize children with the new space and ease their anxiety on the first day of kindergarten, **Twohie** and Burke encouraged parents to bring their children to their elementary school playground during the summer and read storybooks such as *Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten* by Joseph Slate, *Count Down to Kindergarten* by Alison McGhee, and *First Day Jitters* by Julie Danneberg.

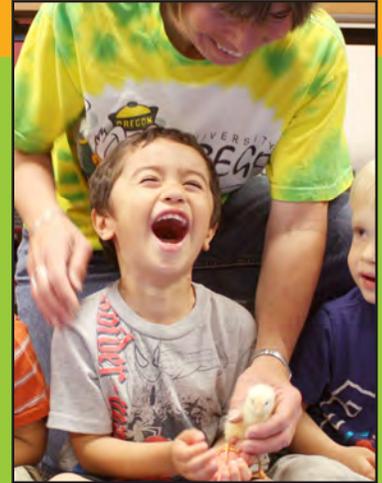
“Supporting children’s communication and social skills will help them to be confident and successful in kindergarten,” said **Twohie** and Burke. Being emotionally ready for school is an important part of school readiness. To view the full transcript, visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc).

## Can My Baby Chick Sleep Over?

**Beth Byham** of Sleepy Hollow SACC and **Sue Deremer** of Olde Creek SACC have been sharing their passion for the 4H Embryology Project with the SACC program for the past seven years. The two Center Supervisors provide training to SACC teachers on the growth of the embryo, incubation procedures and care of the newly hatched chicks. They incorporate successful ways to engage children in the project into their training. This year, 36 SACC centers participated.

SACC children enjoy learning about the development of the embryo to chick and the process of hatching, as well as monitoring the temperature of the incubator and turning the eggs. “If we are lucky, the children actually get to see the chicks hatch while they are in SACC!” says **Deremer**. Taking the baby chicks home for a sleep-over is always a highlight for the children.

On May 4, the chicks from each SACC center came together at the Pennino Building while on their way back to the farm. Children from the Employees’ Child Care Center enjoyed visiting with the baby chicks.



# CARNIVAL SACC STYLE



On April 9, nine SACC centers – Churchill Road, Colvin Run, Franklin Sherman, Freedom Hill, Kent Gardens, Kilmer, Spring Hill 1, Spring Hill 2, and Westgate – organized “The Great American SACC Carnival” to

offer the children, parents, SACC teachers, and community volunteers a chance to come together and enjoy a fun-filled day of food, games, relays and carnival attractions.

## Celebrating Children: A Tapestry of Wonder

This year, the SACC program’s curriculum, Celebrating Children: A Tapestry of Wonder, incorporated the exciting opportunity for children to explore culture through participation in a multicultural song and dance showcase. Four showcases were held, two at Centreville High School in Centreville and two at Carl Sandburg Middle School in Alexandria. The performers, nearly 400 children representing 27 SACC centers, worked with SACC program staff to choreograph their dances, design their costumes, and perfect their routines. The shows featured music from around the world and showcased dance styles from Africa, Asia, South America and the United States of America. Family, friends and neighbors enjoyed watching the terrific performances.

“The young performers learned the importance and benefits of being introduced to different cultural dance styles,” said **Margo Pendleton**, Floris SACC center teacher and the Centreville event coordinator.

“The showcases allowed the children to explore the roots of many popular songs listened to in today’s music,” added **Chris Barker**, Poplar Tree SACC center supervisor and the host of both showcases at Centreville High School.

In addition to providing memorable experiences for the children, each of the showcases benefited local community organizations. Attendees at the events held at Centreville HS donated more than 400 pairs of socks to support Reston Interfaith’s hypothermia project. Canned and boxed food donations were collected for United Community Ministries at the showcases held in south county.



# Early Head Start for Family Child Care Partnerships

On April 30, Angie Godfrey, Infant Toddler Program Specialist for Office of Head Start, Shannon Rudisill, Office of Child Care Director and Linda Smith, Deputy Assistant Secretary and Inter-Departmental Liaison for Early Childhood Development, visited a Fairfax County Word Power class. They observed a group of family child care providers enrolled in an eight-week course to learn English vocabulary that supports their work with young children and appropriate experiences to provide the children in their child care programs.

The visit was highlighted in the Early Head Start for Family Child Care Project National Rollout during the week of May 7, 2012. This project promotes successful partnerships between Early Head Start and child care through family child care.



You will be able to view the Early Head Start videos on this national project by going to the Head Start link at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc) under "This Month." Fairfax County was highlighted Tuesday, May 8.

## Principals Breakfast

As the neighborhood school readiness team completes its sixth year, the principals from the participating neighborhood teams came together on March 30 to discuss the project's past, present and future.

The principals exchanged information about community and school events and shared recent endeavors and outcomes, with emphasis on how their schools support children and families as they transition to kindergarten. For example, the opportunity for rising kindergartners to ride on the school bus, practice going through the cafeteria line, draw a self-portrait, have a photo taken with their drawing and receive a goody bag filled with crayons, books, magnetic numbers, playdough, etc, are some of the new, creative and effective ways that school staff are helping children and families feel connected to the school during kindergarten orientation.



In the upcoming school year, the Neighborhood School Readiness project will be evaluated in order to provide information on ways to efficiently expand into new communities as well as to provide recommendations for sustaining the work. A new team is currently planned around three communities in the Mount Vernon High School pyramid.

## 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 Amy Carlini at 703-324-7758 or Nancy McDonough at 703-324-8042. [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc).



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