



## Celebrating Head Start Awareness Month



On Oct. 22, 1982, President Ronald Reagan proclaimed October Head Start Awareness Month. Thirty-one years after the proclamation, the Office for Children Head Start program continues to celebrate the benefits that Head Start brings to the children and families of Fairfax County.

Throughout the month of October, programs participated in a variety of activities and events. One event was an annual coat donation drive for children at Greater Mount Vernon Community Head Start.



Captain Willie Bailey of Fairfax County Fire and Rescue partnered with the program to provide winter coats to Early Head Start and Head Start children, who had fun picking out and trying on their new coats.

The two Head Start classrooms at McNair Elementary School hosted a visit from Supervisor Catherine Hudgins. She observed and participated in interactive lessons that teachers designed supporting literacy.

Head Start also supports families in achieving their goals. The Board of Supervisors highlighted this as they presented a Certificate of Recognition to Glendy Bowman, Head Start parent and chairperson of the Policy Council.

Bowman was recognized for her active involvement in the program, and for being the recipient of the Nancy Elmore Scholarship Award from the Virginia Head Start Association. An open house reception was held afterward to congratulate her and invite the public to learn about Head Start.



# Drama Workshop Engages Educators

The Office for Children is bringing actress and author Lenore Blank Kelner to give a dynamic presentation on incorporating drama into learning activities with young children. Kelner has presented at many education and arts in education conferences, and worked with thousands of teachers nationally and internationally on techniques for integrating drama into daily classroom instruction. Kelner has been a presenter with the education department of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts for 28 years, and served as a Master Artist for the Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning through the Arts for 25 years.

Kelner's presentation explains an approach to teaching called arts integration, in which an art form and another subject area are incorporated in a single experience so that learning objectives are met in both areas. For instance, using story dramatization, children act out stories, retelling and sequencing them in their own words. Through this experience, they

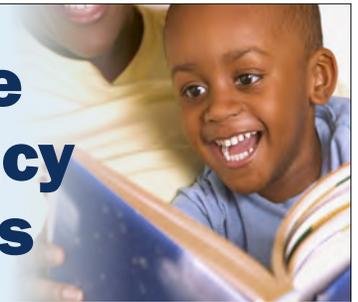
gain vocabulary, language and sequencing skills essential to reading comprehension.

Early childhood educators who attend the workshops learn fun and effective drama techniques especially designed to support them in fostering early language and literacy for children 3-5 years old.

Educators are receiving books and supplies to use in their child care programs to create stories that will engage early language learners using research-based strategies that are fun and developmentally appropriate for preschool students.

"Research shows that active, fun approaches to learning like these help children engage more deeply in learning and better remember what they learn," said the workshops' organizer, VPI Director Carol Osborn. "We are pleased to have Lenore present these proven strategies to educators to enrich the learning experiences they bring to children."

## Where Literacy Begins



Tuesday evenings in late November and December, early childhood educators active in the Virginia Preschool Initiative, the Supporting Quality Initiative, and the Infant Toddler Specialist Network are participating in an exciting professional development opportunity. Community Education and Provider Services has arranged for interested providers to enjoy four fun-filled and informative evening sessions of Where Literacy Begins, presented by the WETA Kids Channel.



In Where Literacy Begins, educators are exposed to a variety of techniques for developing early language, literacy and math skills in children, such as:

- Discovering how to connect age-appropriate educational activities to the developing abilities of infants and toddlers.
- Building an understanding of pre-reading and early alphabet concepts that are key to literacy development.
- Exploring various children's books that can help nurture young children as they learn to speak.
- Learning how playful, everyday experiences encourage early math skills.

CEPS Director, Catherine Sauer, said, "I am thrilled to be able to offer this professional development opportunity to educators. This program helps early childhood educators to engage young children through age-appropriate pre-literacy activities."





## Chalk4Peace at Lake Anne SACC

Children at Lake Anne SACC participated in Chalk4Peace, a worldwide creative presentation for young artists of all ages utilizing the theme of peace. Chalk4Peace began in 2003 in Arlington, VA, as a Sunday sidewalk chalk project for children. Since then it has been recognized by several business, local government and arts organizations and it has spread to more than 400 sites around the world with more than half a million artists. Children at Lake Anne SACC were thrilled to be able to draw their vision of peace as part of a worldwide event.

## SACCTOPIA Winter Program Explores Environmental Design

The SACC Winter Program will be held Dec. 26-27, 30-31, and Jan. 2-3. Children will have fun taking on the role of architects and city planners as they design a blueprint and build a model of unique environmentally friendly cities and communities. Environmentally friendly homes, transportation systems, businesses, parks and playgrounds will be designed to maximize sustainability of the city's land, water and energy sources. Once the city is established, children will elect city officials, write a city motto, choose a town mascot, and create its history, culture and more. A ribbon cutting ceremony and unveiling of the green city's model will be followed by a celebration of the city's first official holiday highlighting the culture, arts, cuisine, sports and leisure activities enjoyed by SACCTOPIA residents and tourists.



# Registration Changes for Institute for Early Learning

The Office for Children's Institute for Early Learning registration process is changing. Effective December 2013, registration for professional development classes will be available on the second Wednesday of each month for classes that begin the following month. Previously, registration took place three times a year, so this new process will offer more timely information about course offerings and more opportunities for child care professionals to register for classes throughout the year.

Each month, an IFEL class flyer will be mailed to family child care providers and center-based programs. The monthly class flyer will also be posted on Child Care Central, the OFC website. Class flyers will contain course descriptions, locations and dates for each of the classes beginning in the designated month.

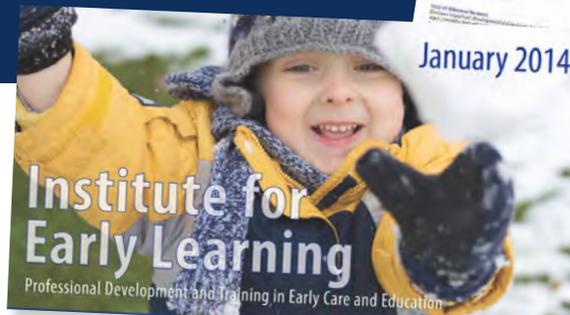
The monthly registration system will provide child care professionals

more opportunities to enroll in classes throughout the year. All child care professionals will be able to enroll in six IFEL courses each year. Family child care providers will be able to enroll in an additional six Family Child Care business courses throughout the year. Registration in additional professional development opportunities such as webinars, seminars, and symposiums will be available throughout the year.

Child care professionals will continue to register using the current processes which include registering online, by FAX, through the automated phone system, or by mailing a registration form. The Institute for Early Learning has changed its email address from

[dfsifel@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:dfsifel@fairfaxcounty.gov) to [childcareclasses@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:childcareclasses@fairfaxcounty.gov) to create a better communication system for our early care and education community.

"We are pleased with the enhancements we have been able to make regarding our Institute for Early Learning registration process," said Karen Quist, director of IFEL. "In recent conversations during community information sessions regarding the changes, early childhood professionals have embraced the changes and are excited for greater access to classes throughout the year."



## OFC 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 Angela Morlu at 703-324-7528 or Nancy McDonough at 703-324-8042. [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc).



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