



40th Annual Nutrition Month Celebration

OFC celebrated the 40th anniversary of National Nutrition Month in March with several fun activities for family child care providers and employees.

Registered dietitians Abeba Tzeggai and Kamini Jassal from Community Education and Provider Services organized two Food and Nutrition Events for child care providers participating in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program. The participants received information about preparing healthy meals and snacks for children. Providers also enjoyed using hats, scarves and musical instruments to explore a variety of dances and other forms of movement that they can use with the children in their care. Baby yoga and country line dancing were favorites among the diverse group of providers who attended.

Each week in March at noon on “Chef Tuesdays” Pennino staff participated in interactive exercise and healthy food demonstrations. Local chefs gave demos preparing nutritious and tasty dishes such as soups, salads and smoothies, and instructors taught yoga poses and meditation exercises to help with relaxation. Participants were excited to try new foods including rainbow carrots, jicama, and Cara Cara oranges, which have a distinctive pink flesh and tangy-sweet taste that works well in salads or squeezed into a vinaigrette dressing.

The chefs also demonstrated lots of useful tips for increasing flavor without increasing sugar and salt in foods. Who would’ve guessed that adding cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg to foods can make the tongue taste sweetness without added sugar; or that, adding dressing only to the lettuce in a salad allows the inherent flavors of other ingredients to shine through and complement the salad?

OFC dietitians Tzeggai and Jassal of CEPS, and Everludis Lopez and Debra O’Farrell of Head Start organized these events for staff with the support of Maria Loh, Registered Dietician from DHS Adult and Aging Services; and Kathryn Strong, Registered Dietician, Saroj Khurana and Patricia Reyes from Virginia Cooperative Extension. Wegman’s was also a sponsor of these staff events.

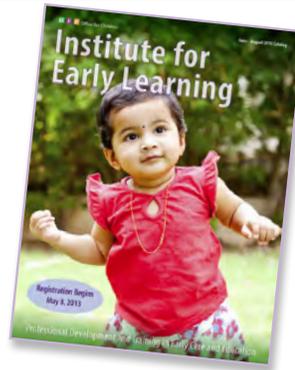


IFEL Summer Catalog is Offering Webinars!

Registration for classes begins May 8 for the courses and workshops advertised in OFC's Institute for Early Learning summer catalog. The catalog features many new classes for early childhood professionals.

For the first time, webinars are being offered among the new classes. Webinars are a convenient way for administrators and educators to engage in professional development. With access to a computer, professionals can view these 1-hour sessions at home or together with colleagues in an early childhood setting.

The Webinar topics include "Math and Science All Around" taught by Karen Quist of IFEL and Ruth Stover of the ECCC, "Building Resilience through Relationships" taught by Maria Gallagher of IFEL, "Introduction to the CDA" taught by Marshann Snyder of IFEL, and "Infants and Toddlers: Food



Allergies and Food Intolerance," taught by Kamini Jassal of CEPS, Julie Renne, Helen Webster, and Debbie Weigand of the Virginia Infant & Toddler Specialist Network.

Webinar registration will be handled separately from regular registration for summer classes. More information will be distributed via email to early childhood professionals this summer.

"Using this technology to bring additional learning opportunities to the early childhood care and education community is of great benefit for everyone," said IFEL Director Karen Quist.

IFEL summer classes start the first week of June and run through August.

Child Care Professionals Week in Fairfax

At the request of the Office for Children, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors declared May 5 – 11, 2013 Child Care Professionals Week in Fairfax County. Noting that child care professionals in Fairfax County work in more than 2,200 family child care homes and more than 500 centers and preschools, the board's proclamation states: "the early care and education experiences provided by child care professionals prepare children for ongoing success in school and in life."

The board's proclamation was in keeping with the commemoration of Provider Appreciation Day, which is celebrated across the U.S. on May 10, and Teacher Appreciation Day on May 7.

The Office for Children is honored to work in partnership with child care professionals and teachers and appreciates all that they do each day to care for the children of Fairfax County.

Head Start Regional Program Specialist Visits



Office of Head Start Region 3 Program Specialist Amanda Ines Dominguez, recently

visited from the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania office to tour several Head Start facilities across Fairfax County. Dominguez is relatively new to her post, and this trip was an opportunity for her to familiarize herself with the area programs that she oversees.

While here, Dominguez and VA Head Start/EHS Training and Technical Assistance Manager Ann Janey-Shultz toured the Greater Mount Vernon Community Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Dominguez and Janey-Shultz met with managers, Tom Collins, Joyce Yang, Claudine Christie, Anne Taggart, Natalie Thornock, and Deborah White to learn about the programs.

Dominguez and Janey-Shultz also visited several classrooms and observed students involved in various learning activities as part of center time

such as painting, sorting, letter stamping and dress up. Dominguez and Janey-Shultz were warmly received by the children, who engaged them in their play.

The visit culminated in a meeting with Supervisor Cathy Hudgins, the Board of Supervisors' liaison to the Head Start program. Supervisor Hudgins discussed the Board of Supervisors involvement in the program's governance and shared her enthusiasm for her work with the Head Start Program's Policy Council.

Teachers Connect with the 3-D Art Process

Bronwyn Dean, an instructor with the Institute for Early Learning, had one thing in mind when she developed the class “Art for Preschoolers” – encouraging participants to engage children in the process of creating 3-D art. Using 3-D materials, like clay, offers children new challenges not present in 2-D experiences.

Dean’s goal was to share with early childhood educators that for children art is not about the end result, but rather, it is about the discovery that comes through the process of making art.

Dean planned an activity that got participants out of their seats and engaged with other classmates. She had them work in small groups, using their natural creativity to make a 3-D sculpture using recycled materials. The sculptures were required to be a minimum of three feet high, with one piece attached to the side and projecting off the main structure.

Dean said, “To make the 3-D sculpture a success the participants had to use problem solving skills while working together to determine how to adhere the pieces together, how to get the sculpture to remain upright, which pieces to use to accomplish a certain design, and so on.”

When the sculptures were complete, Dean asked participants to step back and look at the variety of designs they had created. All groups had access to the same materials, but their sculptures were vastly different. When asked why?, Dean said, “Art should be unique, process driven, and child initiated. We all approach materials in a very personal way, and making these sculptures illustrated that beautifully.”





SACC Showcase

This year, the Fairfax County School Age Child Care program's curriculum, "Kaleidoscope of the Arts, Creativity from Every Angle," incorporates many exciting opportunities for children to explore different aspects of the arts, including the performing arts, visual arts, and language arts. As part of SACC's curriculum, four song and dance showcases were held this spring celebrating children's stories through the performing arts.

Approximately 400 children from 27 SACC centers performed in the "Kaleidoscope of the Arts: Kids on Stage" showcases. The children worked with the SACC teachers to choreograph their dances, design their costumes, and put the final touches on their routines. Performance highlights included a variety of musical numbers ranging from pop, hip-hop and classic rock to Broadway musicals, beloved children's movies, and even a few originals, penned by the children and SACC staff.

Each of the SACC showcases benefited local community organizations. Showcase attendees generously donated baby care products and bath supplies to benefit the children and families served by FACETS.

Attendees also donated hundreds of canned and boxed food items which were presented to United Community Ministries. SACC's outstanding partnerships with community based organizations provide a variety of ongoing opportunities for SACC families, children and staff to make a difference in their communities.



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.



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