

Informational Town Hall for Child Care Providers

The Office for Children and the Department of Zoning hosted an Informational Town Hall meeting to provide state-licensed, family child care providers with information about the county's new zoning rules. To align with state requirements the county recently updated the Zoning Ordinance to allow state-licensed, family child care providers to care for up to 12 children if they have a special permit or special exception and lowered the permit application fee.

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova, Braddock District Supervisor John Cook, Springfield District Supervisor Pat Herrity, Child Care Advisory Council Vice Chairperson Monica Jackson, and OFC Director Anne-Marie Twohie welcomed more than 200 participants and made

opening remarks. Zoning staff explained the application process for the special permit, and gave providers the tools they need to prepare and file special permit applications and also outline a timeline for coming into compliance. This was followed by a question and answer period.

Following the morning session, OFC offered professional development workshops by several presenters from the Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning Through the Arts and National Educational Consulting Services.

Workshop presenters explored the use of drama, dance, storytelling and movement to enrich children's learning experiences. Participants heard



strategies for incorporating movement with purpose into a daily routine, and active ways to involve preschoolers in storytelling and dramatization to build emergent literacy skills. Other presenters emphasized ways that dance/movement experiences help children develop an awareness of their body in space and provide opportunities for physical, emotional and social development.

OFC Director Anne-Marie Twohie remarked that, "OFC was pleased to be part of this event which supported family child care providers and their important work caring for children and families."



Summer Fun at SACC Camp Discovery



This summer, SACC Camp Discovery offered experiences that appealed to the artist, performer and athlete in every child. Teachers guided children through adventures designed to develop their talents, enhance their skills, and nurture their creativity. Children could participate in baseball, soccer, basketball and more in the Athlete’s Cabin, and painting, sculpting, textile design and culinary art in the Artist’s Cabin. Children in the Performer’s Cabin brought stories to life through producing films, singing, dancing and designing sets. Outdoor adventures, swimming, field trips and other activities rounded out a summer of fun.

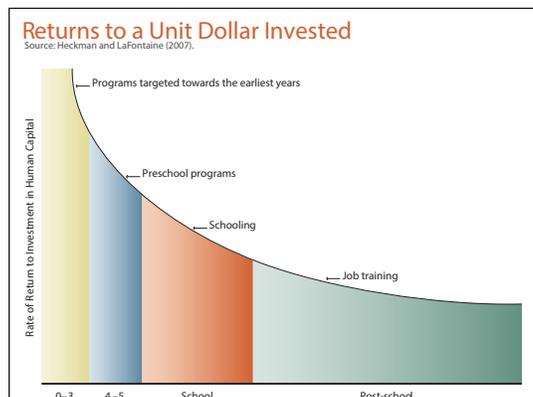
OFC Leads Regional Approach to Quality Rating and Improvement System



The Office for Children has received a grant from the Virginia Department of Social Services to lead a regional initiative expanding the quality rating and improvement system in early care and education programs throughout Northern Virginia.

Coming on the heels of wrapping up the five year pilot of the Virginia Star Quality Initiative for Continuous Quality Improvement,

An Investment in Early Education Yields the Greatest Return.



OFC will partner with Arlington County, Prince William County, and the cities of Alexandria, Manassas, and Manassas Park to develop, coordinate, and implement the QRIS in each jurisdiction. A quality rating and improvement system is used to assess, improve and communicate the level of quality in early care and education settings that families consider for their children.

Through this grant, Fairfax County and regional partners will serve an estimated 108 early care and education programs throughout the region. In addition to continuing support for early care and education programs already in the program, new programs will be recruited through community outreach efforts, focusing on programs that serve children

with disabilities, English learners, children who are homeless, children in foster care, and children in families with low incomes. All participating programs receive quality ratings and mentoring to support the development and implementation of quality improvement plans.

For all programs, as goals are attained, quality improvement plans will be revised and new goals and strategies will be identified, ensuring a systematic approach to obtaining and maintaining the highest level of program quality.

School Readiness Coordinator Betsi Closter said, “OFC is glad to be a part of this important initiative to create a regional approach to expanding the quality rating improvement system in Northern Virginia. We look forward to working with the early childhood professionals in these localities.”

Policy Council Chairperson Awarded Scholarship

Each year the Virginia Head Start Association, Inc. awards the Nancy Elmore Scholarship to assist a current Head Start staff person and a current Head Start parent in pursuing college education.

Recently Glendy Bowman, Treasurer of the Head Start Policy Committee at Fairfax County Public Schools and Chairperson of the Fairfax County Head Start Policy Council, was awarded the scholarship.

Parent engagement is one of the foundational principles of Head Start. Program staff encourages parents to join the policy council, participate in their child's education, and engage with their children at home through school readiness activities. Head Start

provides seminars and other supports to families in the program.

Bowman has taken advantage of those many opportunities, being actively involved in Early Head Start/Head Start for approximately five years. During this time, Bowman has served on parent committees/council, attended national and local Head Start conferences and recently became a certified trainer of "Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors," a parenting education program.

Head Start has made a profound effect on Bowman's life, leading her to choose to study and work in the early childhood field.

The Nancy Elmore Scholarship will provide financial support as



Bowman pursues her coursework towards an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education at NVCC.

Head Start Director Jennifer Branch said "While working with Glendy on Head Start governance I've observed her dedication to the success of the program. It is good to see Glendy recognized for her strong support of Head Start."



According to the National Institute on Out-of-School Time, a growing body of research has shown that regular attendance in high-quality after school programs is associated with a range of positive developmental outcomes for children and youth.

High quality school age child care helps families succeed and children thrive. SACC's active partnership with families via daily communication at centers, the SACC Parent Advisory Council, and annual SACC family survey provides information on the goals and priorities families have for their children. SACC's system-wide efforts

to provide high quality services is built upon the dedication and creativity of SACC staff, and includes dynamic programming, comprehensive staff professional development, and evaluation and feedback through on-site center monitoring visits and compliance with state licensing standards.

Recently, SACC piloted an additional resource, the Assessment of Afterschool Program Practices Tool. Developed by NIOST, the assessment tool helps school age child care programs evaluate and strengthen quality practices that are linked to positive youth outcomes, such as positive peer relationships, task persistence, engagement in learning, and self-confidence. SACC

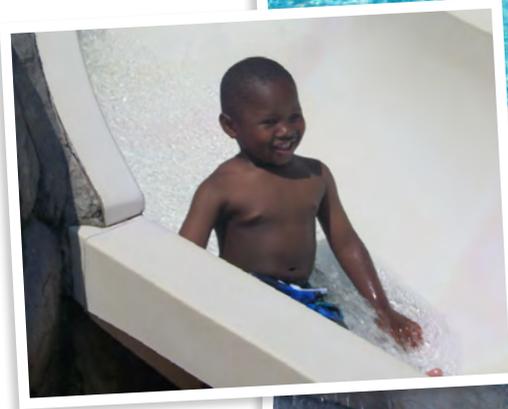
Director Anne Goldstein explained, "APT is one of the only research based tools that help programs measure, document and strengthen the contribution school age child care programs can make to positive youth outcomes."

The information collected from the assessment will be used to identify opportunities for continuous improvement at the center and organizational levels, and will provide a picture of how SACC program quality is linked to successful youth outcomes that will be shared with families, county agencies and the community through the county's Results Based Accountability framework.

QUALITY MATTERS! SACC Program Quality and Youth Outcomes Assessment Project

Head Start Summer Fun!

Children at Greater Mount Vernon Community Head Start are enjoying fun at the pool this summer. Children participated in swimming lessons held at the Mount Vernon Recreation Center three times per week for five weeks. Children also attended an annual summer field trip to Great Waves Waterpark at Cameron Run Regional Park on July 16, 17 and 18. Parents volunteered with their child's classroom at the pool and joined in the fun at Great Waves.



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 Angela Morlu at 703-324-7528 or Nancy McDonough at 703-324-8042. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc.



A Fairfax County, VA Publication



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