

SACC Celebrates the Earth

This year's Spring School Age Child Care program, SACC Celebrates the Earth, was offered at 23 SACC centers throughout the county. During this fun-filled week, children had the opportunity to discover what makes our planet special and explore ways to protect it.

Using the lens of an advocate, environmentalist and conservationist, children discovered ways to make a positive environmental change in their community. Each day offered a variety of eco-friendly projects and outdoor activities that make caring for the earth exciting.

Special musical guest Billy B, the Natural Science Song and Dance Man, visited centers and entertained children with an interactive performance that provided the opportunity for children to share the stage with him. "The best thing about Billy B's performance is that the children have so much fun while learning about



science and nature," said SACC Program Administrator Beth Leggat.

Each center ended the week with a unique and fun way to celebrate and support their earth friendly campaign. At the West Springfield Spring SACC program children planted a tree and celebrated with a tree planting ceremony. At Hayfield SACC children worked on developing a butterfly garden. Children attending the spring program at London Towne participated in an Earth Day Celebration which included a Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle Parade. They also shared their Go Green message by decorating the community board at the local Giant Food store.

Children and youth with multiple disabilities attending the SACC spring program at Key center sewed dog blankets and toys and enjoyed a field trip to the Fairfax County Animal Shelter to donate the hand-made items.

The many lessons learned about caring for the earth and its inhabitants will continue to make a difference long after the spring program has ended!



Celebrate Child Care Professionals Week, May 4 - 10



The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors declared May 4 - 10, 2014 Child Care Professionals Week in Fairfax County. Noting that child care professionals in Fairfax County work in more than 2,100 family child care homes and more than 500 centers and preschools, the board's proclamation states "Our future depends on the quality of the early childhood and school age care provided to children today and quality child care services represent a worthy commitment to our children's future."

The board's proclamation coincides with the national observance of Provider Appreciation Day on May 9, and Teacher Appreciation Day on May 6.

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.

SACC Measures Outcomes – RBA

The SACC program, like all Fairfax County Human Service agencies, is using RBA or Results Based Accountability as a planning approach to determine "how much" work we are doing, "how well" we are doing it, and how much "better off" the children and families we serve are as a result of receiving our services. In SACC, these outcomes are measured in the area of Successful Youth and Families.

The School Age Child Care program helps families succeed and children thrive by providing high quality school age child care before and after school and during school breaks. SACC provides child care services for families with children in kindergarten through sixth grade, and children and youth to age 21 with multiple disabilities. In FY 2013, more than 700 staff served 13,515 children - 1,111 of whom have special needs - from 10,369 families.

Data from the most recent parent survey indicated "how well" SACC was doing - extremely well. Parent

satisfaction has increased again this year, with 98 percent of families indicating they were satisfied with SACC services and that staff know and positively respond to the needs of their children. Additionally 96 percent of families responded that SACC provided a variety of creative activities and learning opportunities for their children.

**SACC
Parents say
staff supports
children's
positive peer
relationships
98%**

During this first year tracking RBA, SACC had two "better off" measures. Currently, 98 percent of parents say that their children enjoy SACC, and that SACC staff support their child's positive interactions with other children. In the future, SACC will be tracking how the program supports positive social, emotional, and physical development and other youth outcomes as measures of how families are "better off."

These measures indicate that the SACC center environment, the engaging curriculum experiences offered to children, and the care, supervision, guidance and support children receive during non-school hours make a positive difference.



James W. Willis, DDS and chair of Northern Virginia Dental Society Community Outreach; Mary E. Pryor, DDS, MS, dental programs administrative director; Governor Terry McAuliffe; Peter K. Cocolis, Jr., DMD, MAGD, president of Northern Virginia Dental Society

MOM Project Touches Head Start Families

OFC's Head Start program recently participated in the 11th Mission of Mercy (MOM) Project, which provided much needed dental care at no cost to uninsured, and under-insured income-eligible adults from Northern Virginia jurisdictions.

Head Start Quality Assurance Specialist Karle Finley coordinated Head Start's participation, reaching out to family service workers in all programs including OFC delegates Higher Horizons and Fairfax County Public Schools. Finley worked with FSWs to recruit adult family members in need of dental services. FSWs also helped family members to complete required paperwork and make sure that they were prescreened to qualify for care before the event.

The MOM Project is a partnership between Northern Virginia Dental Society and Northern Virginia Community College, and it took place at the NVCC's Medical Education Campus. The Mom Project brought together 111 general dentists, 31 specialists, 58 hygienists, 97 dental assistants and 268 community volunteers, including first and second year Medical Education Campus dental hygiene students, to provide treatment to 932 patients. A wide range of oral health services were offered including cleanings, extractions, fillings, and prophylaxis. The total value of care was estimated at \$392,196.

"We are pleased that so many Head Start parents were able to receive dental care through this community outreach," said Finley. "The program makes it possible for them to experience better overall oral health, relief from pain and brighter smiles."



Head Start parents await treatment, receive treatment, and receive dental hygiene bags as they leave.



CEPS Partners with George Mason University

A change in the Fairfax County Home Child Care ordinance last year now requires all family child care providers to serve meals and snacks that meet the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program requirements. As a result, Community Education and Provider Services staff has been working to raise awareness and encourage providers to join the USDA program and receive ongoing nutrition education and support.

As part of this effort, CEPS has partnered with George Mason University's Department of Nutrition and Food Studies to provide health and nutrition education to Child Care Providers in Fairfax County. Earlier this year, Kamini Jassal and Abeba Tzeggai, CEPS nutritionists, gave presentations at graduate and undergraduate nutrition classes at GMU. They spoke about the USDA Food Program, OFC's role in educating family child care providers about nutrition, and "Eat and Run," a book developed by CEPS to help providers bring good nutrition and physical activity into their child care programs.

GMU nutrition students are required to perform four hours of volunteer activity, and CEPS provided them the opportunity to volunteer at one of the Eat and Run nutrition events in March. Following an hour of training with CEPS staff, they performed three hours of observation and volunteer assistance at one of the events. Additional Eat and Run events are scheduled in May and July. Students will have the opportunity to participate in those and other future events.

CEPS is also developing a practicum program so graduate students can participate in internships with CEPS, working on Food Program recruitment, orientations and trainings. "We are pleased to be working with staff and students in the nutrition program at George Mason," said CEPS Director Catherine Sauer. "This partnership will allow us to reach the community, while providing real world experience to these dedicated students."



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.



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