



Spring 2009

# Update

*A newsletter for Fairfax County child care professionals*

Fairfax County Department of Family Services/Office for Children

## Special Event April 25!

You are invited to join us on Saturday, April 25, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center, where we will recognize the efforts of child care professionals and hold the 2009 School Readiness Symposium.

This year's program will focus on the role of play in supporting young children's school readiness. Guest speakers include Roberta Golinkoff, PhD, author of several books, including "Play = Learning," and

Stuart Brown, PhD, founder of the National Institute for Play and author of the forthcoming book "Play: How It Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination and Invigorates the Soul."

A light lunch will be served. While there is no charge to attend this program, preregistration is required. Look for your invitation and registration information in the mail by the end of March.

## Helping Children Love to Learn

**Simple activities you do with children every day can help them develop the more complex skills they will need for success in school and life. The activities below introduce children to math and science concepts.**

### Math

Children show an interest in mathematical concepts at just a few months of age. You can help them learn about numbers and counting, space and size, and shapes and patterns by:

- Including counting as part of your daily routine, for example, counting buttons when dressing, or counting crackers as you eat snacks.
- Noting the size of objects by arranging things by how large or small they are.
- Sorting objects, such as socks from the dryer, by color and size.

### Science

Children are naturally curious about the world around them. You can encourage this curiosity by:

- Taking children outside everyday so that they can experience different types of weather.
- Encouraging children to collect objects, such as leaves or rocks, and comparing their sizes, shapes and colors.
- Asking children during water play to predict which objects will sink or float.

### Resources

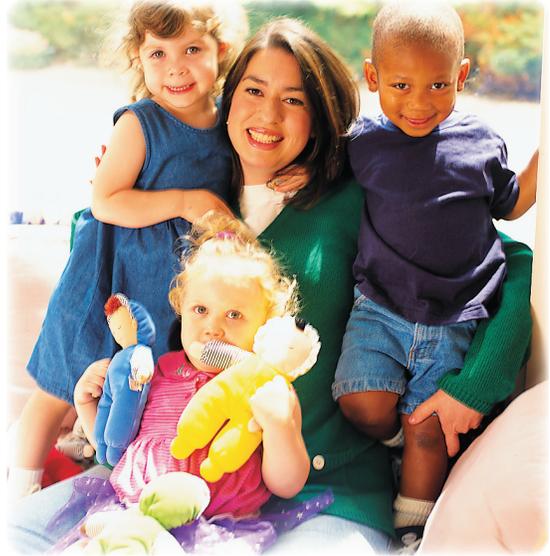
Learn more about building children's skills in our "Early Learning Guidelines" manual. You can read it online at [www.fairfaxcountyg.gov/ofc](http://www.fairfaxcountyg.gov/ofc). A companion booklet, "Helping Your Child Love to Learn," written for parents, is available on the Fairfax Futures Web site [www.fairfax-futures.org](http://www.fairfax-futures.org).

**March is National Nutrition Month. For healthy eating tips see page 5!**

# BUSINESS

## New Marketing Campaign

This spring the Office for Children's new marketing campaign will share information with families about the advantages of choosing permitted or stated-licensed family child care providers. We'll help families to understand that regulated providers receive training and information that not only helps keep children safe, but also supports early childhood education. We will encourage families to make sure their family child care provider has a county permit or state license.



## School Age Child Care Training

We are happy to announce three new school age child care training opportunities. Here's your sneak peek! These workshops will be offered this summer.

**“Recycling and the Environment”** – Learn how to teach children about recycling, ecology, the environment and biomes through hands-on activities.

**“Including Children With Special Needs”** – Discover ways to include school age children with varying needs in group care. The emphasis will be on developing a plan of action for children with challenging behaviors.

**“Good Old-Fashioned Creative Play”** – Explore how to give children the freedom to experience creative play while keeping them safe and teaching them self-regulation skills.

Look for these workshops in the summer catalog, which will be available on the Office for Children Web site in May: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc).

## Update Newsletter Going Green

Starting with the Fall issue, this “Update” newsletter will be “going green!” We’re going to print fewer paper copies of this newsletter, and we’ll send postcards and e-mails inviting you to read the newsletter online.

This will allow you to:

- Reduce clutter by having one less paper publication in your home.
- Be able to click on Web sites mentioned in this newsletter, instead of having to type them out on your computer.
- Share information with friends quickly and easily by e-mailing them the link to the newsletter.

Please make sure we have your current e-mail address so that we can communicate this and other important information with you quickly and economically. We will continue to print and mail a limited number of paper issues of “Update” to providers without Internet access.



# BUSINESS

## Promote Your Business

Promoting your business on an ongoing basis will help keep it full even if your current customers move out of the area or their children grow out of care.

Since most Fairfax County residents have Internet access, consider promoting your business online. For example, you can list your business on all three of these online services for free: [www.care.com](http://www.care.com), [www.daycarematch.com](http://www.daycarematch.com) and [www.craigslist.com](http://www.craigslist.com). You can also create a simple Web page for your business, at no cost, on [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and [www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com).

If you have a digital video camera, or a cell phone that records video, you can make a very short video about your business and put it on the Internet. The video can show you talking about

your business as you show viewers your permit, your CPR and first aid certificates, your USDA Food Program papers, your emergency plans and equipment, and your training certificates. You can put the video online at [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com).

There are a few Web sites where you can advertise your business for a fee.

These include: [www.daycare.com](http://www.daycare.com),  
[www.childcare-directory.com](http://www.childcare-directory.com),  
[www.daycareproviders.com](http://www.daycareproviders.com),  
[www.findcarenow.com](http://www.findcarenow.com)  
and [www.superpages.com](http://www.superpages.com).



You can always advertise for free at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc).

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## Tax I.D. Numbers



It's tax time! Federal taxes must be paid to the IRS by April 15 and state taxes must be paid to Virginia by May 1. The IRS can penalize you for not giving a tax

identification number to the families who pay you to care for their children. Parents need your tax ID number in order to submit their own taxes. A tax ID number can be your social security number or an Employer Identification Number. To find out how to apply for an EIN, call 800-829-1040 or go to [www.irs.gov/businesses](http://www.irs.gov/businesses).

## Informed Consumer Education

This free, six-week training course will cover managing your money, the importance of credit, how to avoid credit traps, and homebuyer education. Tuesday evenings, April 14, 21, 28 and May 5, 12, and 19 from 7 - 9 p.m. at the Falls Church Human Services Building. To register, call Our Daily Bread at 703-273-8829.

## Internet Resources for Small Businesses

The **Community Business Partnerships** offers training and support to those seeking to build successful small business in Fairfax County and beyond: [www.cbponline.org](http://www.cbponline.org).

The **Small Business Administration** offers to aid, counsel, assist and protect the interests of small businesses: [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov). The National Federation of Independent Businesses is the leading small business association representing small and independent businesses: [www.nfib.com](http://www.nfib.com).

## Free Tax Preparation Assistance

If you made less than \$42,000 in 2008 you may qualify to receive money back from the IRS. There's a free service that will help you fill out your tax forms and find out if you're eligible to receive a refund. Last year, families in our community received \$2 million in tax refunds as a result of this free service. For details and locations, call the Falls Church Skillsource Center at 703-533-5400 or go to: [www.nvacash.org](http://www.nvacash.org).

# Health and Safety

## Sudden Infant Death Syndrome



SIDS is the unexplained death of a child during its first 12 months of life. The following is a checklist for caregivers and parents to help reduce the risk of SIDS:

- Always place the baby on his/her back to sleep at night and naptime. Exception: If the parent requests an alternate sleeping position, a physician's note specifying this must be kept in the child's file.
- Give babies plenty of supervised play time on their stomachs when awake.
- Use a firm mattress in a safety-approved crib or bassinet.
- Eliminate fluffy, loose bedding from the baby's sleeping area.
- Keep the baby's face clear of coverings.
- Ask the parent to provide a sleeper garment. Dress the baby in it for sleep instead of using a blanket or comforter for a cover.
- Do not allow babies to share a crib, even if they are brothers, sisters or twins.
- Do not let the baby get too warm during sleep.
- Do not allow smoking around the baby or let babies sleep in a room where smoking is allowed (even if no one is smoking while the baby is in the room).

If you must use a blanket follow these steps:

- 1) Place the baby with its feet at the foot of the crib
- 2) Bring a thin blanket up only as far as the baby's chest.
- 3) Tuck the blanket firmly under the crib mattress.

SIDS workshops will be offered in March and in the Fall; look in the Family Child Care Business section of the training catalog. For more information about reducing the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, you can contact SIDS Mid-Atlantic Alliance, 2700 S. Quincy Street, Suite 220, Arlington, VA 22206, 703-933-9100, [sidsma27@aol.com](mailto:sidsma27@aol.com) or [www.sidsma.org](http://www.sidsma.org).

## Family Watchdog

Family Watchdog allows you to see where registered sexual offenders live and work near you. Family Watchdog services are free; there is no fee associated

with looking up offenders and viewing maps. You can also sign up to receive free e-mail alerts. Family Watchdog can notify you when a registered sexual predator moves within five miles of a given address that you care about; Family Watchdog can also track offenders and send you notifications if the specified offender has a change. The site is updated daily (and for some states, several times each day):

[www.10.familywatchdog.us](http://www.10.familywatchdog.us).

## Free Publication

Look for the "Safety Tips to Prevent Children Falling From Open Windows" publication on the Department of Family Services Web site: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs). The online information underscores the importance of taking care with young children and open windows, especially from April 1 through November 1. The material was developed in collaboration with the Fairfax County Department of Fire and Rescue.

## Free Public Alert Radios

Public alert radios are offered to people working with children to help safeguard children in care. These radios operate continuously to alert you to emergencies, terror threats and weather conditions. They are provided at no cost through the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency. To receive your public alert radio:

1. Go to this Web site:  
<http://public-alert-radio.nws.noaa.gov>.
2. Look for "Non-Public School." Select the Pre-K option.
3. On the NOAA Public Alert radios for Schools page, select "Continue to Radio License Agreement."
4. Enter your zip code and select "search."
5. Review this list of pre-K programs that have received radios. Select "My Non-Public School Is Not Listed."
6. Review the information on the next page which asks that you re-confirm, "My School Is Still Not Listed."
7. This will take you to "Register or License Your Device." Enter your personal information.
8. One of the last questions will ask "Did you receive a radio?" Select "No."
9. Select "Submit" so your request can be processed.

## Hand Washing Keeps Germs Away

Your health is in your hands! Wash your hands often; it's one of the most important – and easiest – actions we can take to prevent getting sick and spreading illness to others. Diseases such as gastro-intestinal illnesses, influenza, the common cold, salmonella, pink eye and many others can be prevented by washing hands thoroughly.

Hands should always be washed AFTER:

- using the toilet
- coughing, sneezing or using a tissue
- eating, drinking or smoking
- touching cuts, burns or infected areas on the skin
- handling raw meat and poultry
- changing diapers
- touching animals
- touching public surfaces like door handles.



Hands should always be washed BEFORE:

- inserting or removing contact lenses
- preparing food
- eating
- touching eyes, nose and mouth

You can download the brochure, “Wash Your Hands to Stop the Spread of Germs and Prevent Disease,” or print out hand-washing posters in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean or Vietnamese from the Health Department’s Web site. Look for “Wash Your Hands” at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd).

## NUTRITION

### Developing Healthy Eating Habits



Children imitate the attitudes and behaviors of the adults in their lives. They are likely to imitate your table manners, your likes and dislikes, and your willingness to try new foods. As a child care

professional, you have influence on the children in your care. You can do a lot to help children develop healthy eating habits for life.

Some of the things you can do are:

- Offer a variety of foods to help children get the nutrients they need from every food group.
- Let the children choose a new vegetable to add to the salads you serve.
- Vary the cereals, types of bread, and sandwich fillings you buy.
- Offer smaller bowls, plates and utensils that children can handle and that will allow children to serve themselves age-appropriate portions.
- Allow the children to serve themselves and only eat as much as they want to eat.
- Teach them to take small amounts at first and tell them they can take more if they are still hungry after finishing their first serving.

- Be a good role model by trying new foods yourself and describe its taste, texture and smell.
- Allow them to stop eating when they are full, rather than when the plate is empty.
- Focus on the meal during meal time by turning off the television and taking phone calls after the meal is finished.

### Unannounced Visits

Every few years, the USDA conducts unannounced visits to providers participating in the Food Program. They check to see that providers keep accurate records and other requirements of the program. Recently, USDA reviewers visited Fairfax County providers, and a number of you received high ratings. Congratulations to the following providers for a job well done! We congratulate you on your dedication, professionalism and hard work.

Fatemen Batmanghelidi

Rosa Bonilla

Hilda Bustamante

Shelem Chinas

Fozia Chughtai

Maria Guevara

Narjis Fatima

Ranjini Goonewardane

Farkhanda Khan

Yajaira Hidalgo

Zohra Panjshiri

Joanne Roberts-Wittauer

Lisa Walker

Mirna Vasquez

Norma Ventura

Afsari Zaib

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## Serve Nutritious Meals and Earn Cash \$\$

That's right! The USDA Child Care Food Program will reimburse family child care providers for some of their child care food costs. All Children are eligible, even infants and part-timers.

As part of the Food Program, you also get:

- Priority registration for special workshops just for Food Program participants
- Help in dealing with parents on food-related business
- Assistance in planning nutritious meals
- Consultation with nutrition specialists

Need more reasons? Look for your number!

Number of Children	Money You Can Claim Monthly		Money You can Claim Yearly	
	Tier One	Tier Two	Tier One	Tier Two
5	\$476.28	\$191.10	\$4,762.80	\$2,293.20
3	\$238.14	\$114.66	\$2,857.68	\$1,375.92

Providers who participate in the Child Care Food Program serve children nutritious meals and snacks. As soon as you have a permit and children in care, call 703-324-8100 to register for a USDA Food Program Orientation. You can even submit your food program records online using the Web HX system.



Reasonable accommodations will be made upon request.  
 Call 703-324-8100, TTY 711.



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