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# THE JOB COUNCIL PROVIDING WORKFORCE RESOURCES

# Provider

## Summer 2009

# P R E S S

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### It's All about Relationships

A very common topic among early childhood educators is how to have more harmony in the classroom and how to have more harmony with parents. The solution is to focus on building relationships. When we express genuine care and empathy for the children in our care and their parents, good things happen:

#### **We take the time to get to know the children and their families**

We learn what children like/dislike, we study their temperaments, and we identify the areas of development they excel in as well as those areas that need more time to develop. When we create an environment that supports the needs of the children, they flourish and behavior challenges diminish because their social and emotional needs are being met. Parents will notice the care and attention being given to their child and their trust will increase.

#### **We make time to check in with parents on a regular basis**

When parents feel that we value them as the experts on their child, as their child's first teacher, they begin to open up and share information, stories, and struggles. They will begin to see us as a resource they can access for information about child development, guidance, developmentally appropriate activities, and even community resources.

#### **We greet children by name in the morning and actively invite them in**

Children respond to individual attention and a warm and supportive morning greeting sets the tone for the day. The child feels acknowledged and welcomed and the parent feels their child is in good hands.

#### **We celebrate with parents the important milestones children are experiencing**

When parents see that we are just as excited about their child's new tooth or first word, or about how their child is learning to share, they see us as important people in the lives of their children.

#### **We think of parents as part of our 'team' and take advantage of their wisdom about their children, strategizing with them about how to solve challenges**

When parents feel respected for the knowledge they have

about their children and for their role as the child's parent, they begin to share their observations and insights, ask questions, and give feedback. This leads to meaningful exchanges and trust – the building blocks necessary for a strong relationship.

Time spent nurturing these relationships not only brings harmony to the facility, it positively impacts the entire family. All families in your care benefit, but especially those families that may have risk factors for child abuse and neglect. Those risk factors include unemployment, drug or alcohol abuse, financial struggles, having a new baby in the family, domestic violence, and single parenting without support from other family members. You may never know that a family is struggling, but by focusing on building relationships you are changing lives.

### An Opportunity to Help Jackson County Children Arrive at Kindergarten Ready for School

Child Care Resource Network has been awarded a generous grant from the Anna Mae Foundation to offer a project called "Bridging the Gap: Early Screening Promotes Kindergarten Success". Currently, one in four children in Jackson County arrives at kindergarten with developmental barriers in place.

This project offers developmental screenings for infants and children through age 5 at child care facilities (family child care and center-based care) to identify how children in care are doing in the various domains of development. A consultant will visit child care facilities and assist providers in marketing this service to families.

Families will receive children's books for participating and child care facilities will receive assistance with completing the screening tools with families, referring children to community agencies when needed, and planning activities to enhance areas of development where children may need more assistance.

If you are interested in participating in this project, scheduled to begin this Summer, please contact René Wold at [renew@jobcouncil.org](mailto:renew@jobcouncil.org) or 842-2593.

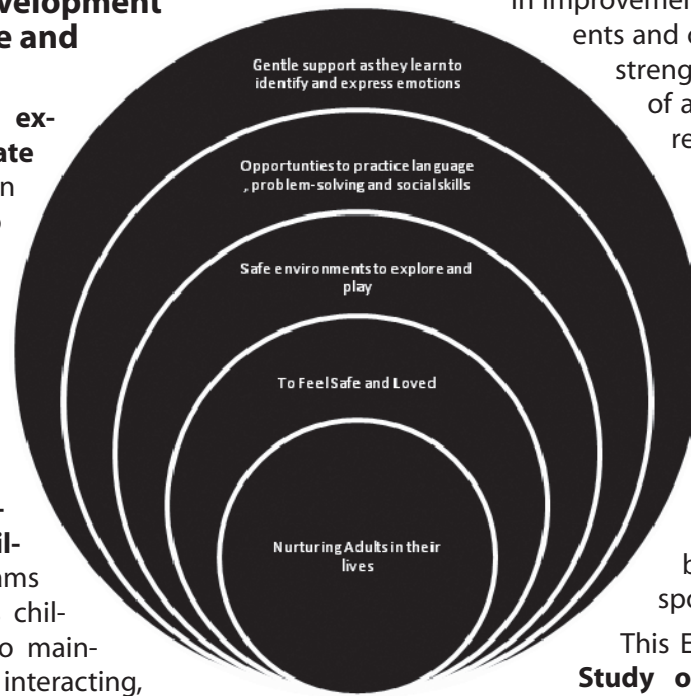
### Potluck

The Josephine County chapter of OAEYC is hosting a potluck at the gazebo in Riverside Park on July 27 at 6:00 pm. Besides food, bring your own plates, cups and silverware. Also, bring supplies, toys, etc. you no longer need and exchange them for things you do need. And we will be making plans for collecting items for the non-profit sale at the Courier parking lot on August 1st. We look forward to seeing you.

## What Children Need for Healthy Social and Emotional Development

### How Does Promoting Children's Healthy Social and Emotional Development Help Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect?

- **It teaches children how to express themselves and advocate for their feelings and needs.** In many cases, children's ability to make their needs known and express their feelings has direct impact on how parents treat them. As children's social and emotional skills improve, parents' responses also improve.
- **It enhances relationships between parents and their children.** The ways in which programs work with parents to address children's challenging behavior, to maintain non-violent norms for interacting, and to develop parents' ability to nurture their



children's social and emotional development often result in improvements in communication between parents and children. Improved communication strengthens both parents' understanding of and love for their children and their relationships with them.

- **It strengthens parenting.** When parents feel supported by child care staff and assisted in resolving difficult behavioral issues with their children, they are better able to manage the stress of parenting and simultaneously interact more constructively with their children. Parents learn and practice alternative methods for disciplining their children and broaden their range of possible responses to children's behavior.

This Excerpt is from **The Center for the Study of Social Policy's Strengthening Families Initiative** [www.ccsf.org](http://www.ccsf.org)

## EQUIP

On May 11, the Oregon Commission for Child Care, the Children's Institute, The Oregon Community Foundation, and the Oregon Child Care Division announced a new initiative to improve the quality of early childhood care and education. They have named this initiative the Education and Quality Investment Partnership (EQUIP). The initiative will promote professional development of early childhood care and education workers as well as increasing program quality. Initial support for EQUIP includes \$2.9 million in federal stimulus funds and a \$200,000 contribution from The Oregon Community Foundation.

EQUIP has two strategies: Create incentives for providers to reach higher levels of education and encourage centers and family child care homes to reach a new statewide benchmark for quality. To achieve the first strategy, child care providers who move through the steps on the Oregon Registry will receive education awards. The awards are organized into three Milestones as explained in the Oregon Registry article. Providers must be working with children 20 hours a week or more and must be licensed or working in a licensed facility to qualify for the award.

Awards of \$50.00 are offered to license exempt providers and those working in license exempt facilities at step 3 or higher. The Oregon Center for Career Development is administering the education awards and is notifying all licensed providers at step 3 or higher on the Oregon Registry of this incentive program. They will be sending application packets shortly for providers to complete and submit for review. Providers will receive one education award per Milestone and only one award per fiscal year. A fund to promote program level improvements will be launched in a later phase. If you are a provider at Step 1 or 2 who would like to apply for a higher step, please call Patty at 842-2590 for assistance.



## What is the Oregon Registry and why should I care?

The Oregon Registry was created for professionals in the field of early childhood care and education to be recognized for their educational achievements. It is organized into 12 steps. Step 1 is awarded to individuals who have 12 hours of training in childhood care and education. Step 12 is awarded to those having a doctorate degree. There is a lot of room in between! Newly Registered providers are automatically awarded Step 1 and are awarded Step 2 upon renewal. Beyond Step 2 an application is required.

There are several reasons why enrollment and advancement on the Oregon Registry is important. It may be used as a marketing tool for your business. Sharing your educational accomplishments with perspective clients can be very powerful. Who would not be impressed with a provider who is committed to continuing education in an effort to offer high quality child care? Although you may not be able to charge more for care, you will probably have fewer openings. Parents are increasingly looking at quality, as well as price, when choosing care.

In 2009 the Child Care Division began collecting data from certified centers and certified family providers. In 2010 they will begin collecting data from registered providers. The data collected falls into seven "quality indicators", training, as reflected by the Registry, being one of the seven. The other indicators are: ratio of children to adults, group size, staff turnover or stability in provider/child relationship, staff compensation, and program accreditation. The data for each provider is analyzed and a report sent to the provider. The report contains the quality indicator information for that program, as well as how the program compares with others. The provider may choose to allow the information to be distributed to parents and the community.

Another appealing reason for advancement on the Registry is the Education Award. This new program offers a monetary award for providers who reach particular "milestones" on the Registry. Providers from Step 3 thru Step 6 could be eligible to receive \$100.00. Providers from Step 7 thru Step 8.5 could receive \$250.00. Providers Step 9 and above could receive \$500.00. The Education Awards are part of EQUIP (Education and Quality Investment Partnership). To find out more about EQUIP, please read the accompanying article in the newsletter.

Enrollment on the Oregon Registry is a convenient way to showcase the amount of training you have taken, but the most important thing is the training itself. Through continuing education, providers are able to offer higher quality care, supporting children's healthy social/emotional development, helping them learn how to identify their feelings, empathize with others, share emotions appropriately, and problem solve. Children take these skills home, which affects the ways they interact with their families. Social/emotional competence is one of the five protective factors that strengthen families and protect children. High quality child care benefits the children, their families, and our communities. You do make a difference!

## Americans with Disability Act – How this law relates to your business

*It has come to our attention that there is some confusion around accepting children with disabilities into care. We strongly encourage providers to go to the source when seeking out information about laws affecting their business.*

### What is the Americans with Disabilities Act?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal civil rights law. The ADA says that people (children or adults) with disabilities are entitled to equal rights in employment, public services, and access to public accommodations. The act was created to remove barriers that often limit basic opportunities and choices.

### Does the ADA apply to me as a child care provider?

Yes, "public accommodations" include family child care homes, preschools, child care centers and group homes. If you provide child care as a business in a home or center you cannot refuse to serve a child just because he or she has a disability. The ADA says you must make "reasonable accommodations" to serve children with disabilities. "Reasonable accommodation" means adaptations that are not excessively expensive and that do not cause you to make fundamental changes in your setting or program.

### How can I make sure I comply with the ADA?

Here are some things you can do to assure that you are in compliance with the ADA:

**Take time to talk to parents who call about child care for a child with special needs.** Discuss how you could meet the child's needs, and find out if the child requires adaptations or accommodations.

**Make your decision whether or not you are able to serve a child on an individual basis.** If you are not sure that you can safely or appropriately care for a child, decide only after talking with parents about their child's specific needs. It may also be helpful to speak to someone who has expertise in the child's disabilities. Parents may be able to direct you to a professional who can help with this.

**Evaluate your policies and procedures.** Make sure they don't screen out children with disabilities.

**Be ready to make simple changes** in activities that allow all children to participate.

**Do not have higher rate** that applies just to children with disabilities. (For example: If you charge based on age, you must charge the same rate for special needs as you do for normally developing children of the same age category.)

**Be sure to ask parents about the information and support** that they or professionals that work with the child may be able to offer.

For more detailed information about this law, go to: [www.ada.gov/childq&a.htm](http://www.ada.gov/childq&a.htm) If you have business or child care questions related to this law, or to learn about subsidy programs that may be able to supplement your rates, please call CCRN: 842-2591 [lisaw@jobcouncil.org](mailto:lisaw@jobcouncil.org)