



Child Care Network

Early Childhood News

Special points of interest:

- ED Letter & EcoHealthy strategies (page 2)
- CACFP & Infant-Toddler news (page 3)
- Zoom opportunities (page 4)



Fall Early Childhood Conference Postponed

With so much uncertainty in the future, the Child Care Network has decided it prudent to postpone the Early Childhood Conference at Fort William Henry. It is hoped that planning will be more conducive for something in late spring, perhaps with a slightly different format. We also hope to be able to offer a fall conference option in 2021.

Think back to December 31, 2019. It's New Year's Eve. We are dreaming of a new and better decade, 2020 with thoughts of hope, happiness and good health. It seems so long ago and only yesterday at the same time. Who could have imagined that life would be the way it is today?

We have learned a lot in the past six months. Novel Coronavirus, PPE, masking, essential workforce, work at home, unemployment, home schooling, drive-by birthday parties, virtual graduation, Zoom, Skype, Face Time, George Floyd, protests, defunding police, underfunded and/or under utilized child care. With all that we have learned, we use this knowledge to plan for the next six months with renewed hope for a tomorrow that can help us move forward to a way of life that offers us comfort.

At the Child Care Network, we learned that we need to change the way we do business so we can continue to meet the needs of the provider community, their children and families, and businesses whose workforce depends on quality care in new and different ways. The hope is to improve the way we offer services.

After working at home for longer than staff ever imagined, we learned that working remotely works. With new and different efficiencies of staff being in nine different locations, services continued. The Provider Services Team (Pam, Patty and Sue) started making calls to all providers in our database. We were surprised at how many people seemed to like those calls. We plan to implement a service plan with more personal communication in the future. That plan has yet to be developed. We encourage providers with thoughts on how SACCN can meet your needs to please help us develop a plan that suits you. Send us your ideas.

The SACCN office is developing a plan for reopening on July 6. With safety in mind, both physical and emotional, the re-open plan will start regular office hours with staff returning gradually with a combination of remote work and in office work. Procedures must be developed for many things. When and how will staff visit programs? How will training be offered? How do we develop a policy on disinfecting things that everyone touches? Do we need to take temperatures regularly? When and how can we offer Health & Safety training which poses minimal risk to participants?

With fewer opportunities for live, face-to-face connections, the Child Care Network plans to investigate ways to meet virtually. Directors' Lunch & Learn meetings have started getting together via Zoom, minus the lunch. For family child care programs, we hope to offer a "Lunch & Learn" type of program, too. We know that lunch time is out for Monday through Friday. Would Saturday work? Would "Sup & Such" be preferred? Might this be an effective tool to learn what the provider community needs from us?

Also in this newsletter, EcoHealthy strategies to maintain a healthful environment on Page 2 can help reduce children's exposure to potentially harmful cleaning products. We have included thoughts on delivery of services from the Food Program and the Infant-Toddler program on page 3. Thoughts on Zoom opportunities can be found on Page 4.

Stay safe, Stay informed, Stop the spread!



The Child Care Network's

mission:

“To strengthen the quality of children’s early care and learning.”

SACCN Office Closings

July 3, Independence Day

September 7, Labor Day

Office hours:

At press time, the office is open only by appointment for Covid-19 safety

From the Director’s Desk

Since the last newsletter, we all have been through a lot and much has changed. It was still winter and snow was on the ground. Today, it is 87 degrees, the sun shines and the gardens are in full bloom. Every day beginning in mid-March seemed to be a challenge. I had two mottos that personally kept me going. “Get up and show up” and some days that was all I could ask of myself. On those days when I really struggled, I would remind myself that “Life can be hard and I can do hard”. I believe these challenging times will continue. We all will continue to adapt, adjust, reimagine and revision our work and lives. Our cover article explains some of the ways SACCN is adapting and re-imagining doing business differently.

In spite of the challenges there have been some exciting initiatives and successes during the past couple of months.

We were in the process of planning a provider recognition dinner and training when all live events and gatherings had to be cancelled. We scrambled and came up with a different way to recognize the hard-working dedicated providers in our community. On May 8, Provider Appreciation Day, all staff at the Child Care Network were out delivering gifts to providers to say thank you. We always want providers to get the recognition they so deserve and felt that even more so this year. There was so much focus in the news on essential workers, but child care never seemed to get in the limelight. Without child care, most of those other essential workers would not have been able to work and serve the community. I again take this opportunity to say a big THANK YOU for continuing to serve.

Secondly, we were privileged to

be part of the CARES Scholarships, a benefit to both providers and parents during these tough times. Part of that grant included funding to purchase supplies for providers. Many supplies were on back order and unavailable. Finally in mid-June we had many of the items in hand and scheduled a pick up day on June 20. We had no idea how we would pull this event off, but somehow creative minds came together and providers received the much-needed supplies.

What will tomorrow bring, or next month or next year? I never had those answers. I feel even more uncertain now but I am confident that we will be here stronger than ever continuing to do what we have done every day.

Be well, be safe and continue to carry on. Thank you.

Lynn

Meeting OCFS Requirements for Cleaning and Disinfection

According to the recently released “INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR CHILD CARE AND DAY CAMP PROGRAMS DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY”, programs are required to “Adhere to hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection requirements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Department of Health (DOH) and maintain logs on site that document date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection.”. This offers an effective strategy to help prevent the spread of illness.

Child care programs have long been cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting regularly. Today it is critical that these practices be done correctly. The quick squish, squirt and done is a thing of the past. Those who truly hope to reduce the spread of illness must adhere to research driven and scientifically proven lines of attack that effectively do the job. The Environmental Work Group (EWG) shares a few important tips to get started:

- Read labels carefully, including all directions and warnings, and apply the product as directed.
- Wear gloves and other personal protective equipment as directed.
- Ventilate the area while cleaning.
- Never mix cleaning products and disinfectants together.
- Clean visibly dirty or greasy areas with soap and water before applying disinfectant or sanitizer.
- Focus on surfaces you come into frequent contact with, like doorknobs, handrails, faucets and light switches.

The first bullet asks that the product label be read... the whole thing! There is a lot of safety and proper usage information for the product to be most effective. There are a few things to keep in mind. For a product to do its job (to kill germs that can make someone sick) it must be allowed to dwell on the area to be disinfected for a period of time. This dwell time can range from one minute for some

products, to ten minutes for many disinfectants readily available on grocery store shelves. Read the label to learn how long the product must sit before it kills those dreaded germs. Otherwise, people might believe that they are preventing the spread of illness when they are not. Bleach solutions, as listed in the OCFS Health Care Plan Appendix, when used properly typically take two minutes to do their jobs. Two minutes can seem forever between diaper changes on a properly disinfected changing table. Imagine what ten minutes wait time could be when getting ready for naptime. Read the label. Do it right!

The fifth bullet advises cleaning before disinfecting. Dirt can prevent the disinfectant's ability to do its job. Again, no one wants to live in that false sense of security by taking shortcuts that truly make a difference. Clean, rinse and then apply disinfectant, wait for it to do its work and take comfort that you are protecting children and staff.



CACFP

Contact us at 798-7972 or www.saccn.org
Colleen Maziejka ext. 202,
Linda Scimeca ext.203
CACFP Educators

The following recipe was taken from the CHOP CHOP website, . This is a wonderful resource. We invite you to take a look at it. In response to the pandemic and all of the changes that it has brought about, Chop Chop is offering a free newsletter for children, and one for adults. Visit www.chopchopfamily.org to see them.

MORNING RICE PUDDING Rice pudding is traditionally a dessert, but we like to make it the night before and eat it cold for breakfast! This recipe includes brown rice and plenty of milk, so it's a nourishing start to the day.

INGREDIENTS HANDS-ON TIME: 10 TOTAL TIME: 45 MAKES: 4 SERVINGS

2 cup leftover or freshly cooked brown rice
2 cup milk, plus extra for serving
2 tablespoon maple syrup, plus extra for serving
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon
pinch kosher salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put the rice and milk in the pot, put the pot on the stove, and turn the heat to medium.
2. When the liquid comes to a boil (you'll know it's boiling because you'll see little bubbles breaking at the surface), lower the heat to low. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the milk has been absorbed by the rice, about 30 minutes.

Add the maple syrup, vanilla, cinnamon, and salt and stir well. Cool to room temperature, cover, and refrigerate up to two days. Serve cold, topped with extra milk and a drizzle of maple syrup.

GET CREATIVE

Consider topping each bowl of rice pudding with:

- chopped toasted walnuts, pecans, or almonds
- sunflower seeds or raisins
- fresh or frozen berries, chopped apples, pears, or bananas

Working with Infants and Toddlers in These Challenging Times

Is anybody else having trouble sleeping...or eating...or concentrating? I think I slept 2 hours last night and four the night before. I know I've been noticing a lot of things feel different to me, but I can't quite put my finger on a particular problem to solve. My everyday patterns are off. This is how I deal with stress and as an adult I've known this about myself for a long time. I carry stress in my body like a bag full of rocks. It usually takes me certain stomach pains or annoyances before I recognize it. It has taken me 58 years to understand the rhythm of my body during different times in my life. When this happens to me, I act and react to things unusually. You may not notice it to look at me, but I know it. It's going on inside of me and I have figured out how to not show it over the years. How to keep it under control until I was in a place where I could release it. Do you recognize this in yourself?

Now imagine what kinds of things our infants and toddlers might be dealing with these days. This is our most vulnerable group of children because they can't yet communicate to us through language we can easily understand. If they could, would they tell us that their parents are fighting a lot; that the feeling in the house is scary; that they don't feel comfortable when people who are holding them have their mouth covered; that they don't have their favorite chocolate milk before they go to bed anymore; that nobody has time to play with them anymore; that they miss the other loved ones in their life..... The stresses that are palpable in our lives are not hidden from our little ones. They never have been. Infants and toddlers read the room with their

bodies. They take in the emotions of the people around them to help them understand their world. They can't help it, we can't tell them to stop worrying. It's just a fact.

So how might we "see" infants and toddlers communicating that they are stressed and need our help? Maybe they are refusing to eat, or eating too much, too fast. Maybe they have regressed in potty training, or you're noticing a change in their diapers. Maybe they can't fall asleep during naptime; or need their blankie and binkie more often. Maybe they are clingy or angry or aggressive or sad or any other number of behaviors that you may notice. These small children will tell us through behaviors that make us stop and react. It is more crucial now than ever before that we are "listening" to these nonverbal messages that they need our help and comfort coping with the changes in their worlds. Please approach them with a soft heart and comfort in your eyes. They need it now more than ever.

P.S. And for goodness sake, if you don't have at least four baby dolls that are all different ethnicities in your program every day, fix that now. Please make sure you have books with real people representing all the different people in the human race out EVERY DAY for your children to see. Don't rotate these books and baby dolls out. We must help the generation of children in our childcare today, be the ones who have a world of peace and equity for all humans. This has been going on way too long! Please email me if you want to set up a call or zoom meeting to talk about these things or other infant toddler issues in person!

coninep@saccn.org

Southern Adirondack
Child Care Network

Phone: 518-798-7972
800-807-3224

Fax: 518-812-0799
9:00-4:00 Monday-Friday

*“Strengthening the quality
of children’s early care
and learning.”*

WE’RE ON FACEBOOK
AND TWITTER
FACEBOOK.COM/
SOUTHERNADIRONDACKCHIL
DCARENENETWORK

WWW.TWITTER.COM/SACCN8

Southern Adirondack Child
Care Network is an equal
opportunity provider.

New Zoom Opportunities

SACCN held a large dose of Zoom meetings while working remotely. They allowed us to see faces, but denied us the opportunity to walk into another office to get immediate support for our thoughts on how best to handle certain questions or concerns from the provider community. Zoom certainly has its pros and cons. Let us focus on the positive benefits of Zooming as we plan for the future.

Of course with Zoom, SACCN may be able to provide new and different training opportunities right from the comfort of your home. We know that travel has been a barrier for some providers to attend live training. This may become an option that will meet their needs.

That’s the pro. The con is that trainers will have to learn a new format that is effective, interesting and enjoyable. A 2 hour training on Zoom is unlikely, derstand. so shorter sessions may become the norm.

A plan will be developed to hold regular opportunities for providers who might enjoy to meet together with us in small Zoom groups. This is different that training sessions. It is more of a chat group idea.

We also hope to be allowed to meet our OCFS contract milestones through Zoom meetings when child care programs have questions about certain aspects of their work. Rather than have someone from SACCN go to the program, perhaps Zoom will work to see what is going on in the classroom or child care home. For example, Is proper handwashing a problem? Zoom in and show us what is going on and we can virtually work together to develop a plan for success.

More details will follow as the Provider Services Team develops a strategy.

