

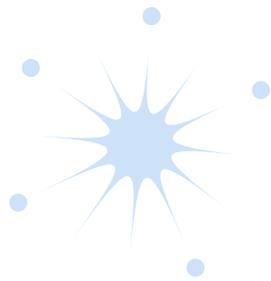


Child Care Network

Early Childhood News

Special points of interest:

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



In March, SACCN staff started working remotely from their homes while the office in Queensbury sat idle. Recently, staff started to return to the office on a staggered schedule. Although the public has yet to be invited back into the office, someone is in the office Monday through Thursday and phone messages can always be taken.

SACCN Office Closings

October 12, Columbus Day
November 26 & 27, Thanksgiving
December 24 & 25, Christmas

Office hours: Staff is available by phone from 9:00-4:00.

Child Care Recognized for Importance in Society

It has been a long time coming. With the disruption of lives during the Covid 19 pandemic, communities have finally become aware of the important role that child care plays in the lives of children, families, and employers. Sometimes it is said, "You don't know what you've got till it's gone!" and that is what happened when many child care programs closed their doors due to the pandemic. Children were sad missing their friends. Parents were frazzled not knowing how to work and care for their children at the same time. Employers were annoyed that productivity was in question. The community didn't know how to make it any easier. Child care accessibility became a buzzword. Politicians, business people, and families finally saw the importance of safe, healthy and secure child care programs. It is about time we offer a shout out to thank all of the child care people in our community. Without you, life seems to fall apart. Funds are now being made available to help child care programs that struggled, trying to keep their doors open for children and their families.

Update on CARES 3 Funding for Child Care

On September 10, Governor Cuomo announced \$88.6 million in CARES Act funding available to assist child care providers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Child care providers should be able to apply for the funding at <https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/childcare/>. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until December 31, 2020.

According to the press release, the \$88.6 million in grant funds will be used as follows:

- \$20 million
Child care scholarships for children of essential workers whose income is less than 300 percent of the federal poverty level - or \$78,600 for a family of four - and will be paid up to market rate for each region statewide. The funding will support 5,400 children in child care for 14 weeks.
- \$20 million
Rental assistance for about 2,300 school-age child care programs with \$2,000 in monthly rental assistance for four months. Programs may also use the funding for transporting children to the new location.
- \$20 million
Grants for closed child care programs to reopen or restructure under new guidelines for social distancing. This may cover partitions, short-term rental space, supplies, or broadband access.
- \$28.6 million
Grants for child care providers to pay for half of the cost (up to \$6,000) to open a new classroom.

SACCN's Role

The Southern Adirondack Child Care Network (SACCN) has been involved with CARES 1 & 2 since Governor Cuomo first announced springtime funding to assist essential workers and child care programs during the pandemic. It started with essential worker scholarships and PPE supplies for child care programs during CARES 1. Then came CARES 2 with grants to expand the number of child care slots throughout New York. With CARES 2 came more supplies to protect children. SACCN administered those funds and assisted providers in obtaining what they needed.

With CARES 3, it is expected that SACCN will again assist parents with scholarships and continue to assist providers in offering safe care for more children.

SACCN also has information on how child care can help school age children meet the demands of remote learning when they cannot be in school in person.



The Child Care Network's mission:

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

From the Director’s Desk

Where did the spring and summer go? Fall officially began on September 22. Signs of fall are all around us. Days and nights are cooler, the sun rises later and sets earlier, the gardens are tired and the leaves are losing their bright lustrous green color. School has begun and with that many questions and challenges for parents, children and child care providers. Remote learning and the on and off schedule of in-school learning are just a few of those challenges. It seems like the changes and the new “norm” are coming at us fast and furious. How do we keep up? I look back and I am going to date myself, to my

early years at SACCN. I remember when it was a big deal when we began using a fax machine and now that is almost obsolete. Then we moved on to communicating via email. We had one email address for all of us. Now email is close to becoming obsolete. Next was the cell phone, used for making phone calls. Now they are an “everything” device. Face to face meetings and trainings are now a thing of the past as we almost exclusively use a virtual format like Zoom or Web Ex, due to COVID 19. I know I have been resistant to each of these changes as they entered my world. I don’t enjoy remote

connection whether it is via phone, email, text or Zoom. And yet I have adapted. Lately adaptations are required almost daily. I want to thank and recognize the hard working child care providers for making those necessary adaptations every day and for continuing to be there for parents and for loving the children who are in your care. Please remember that we, at SACCN are here for you, to assist in whatever way we can. If we can help you solve a problem or ease a little of the stress, then we have done our jobs.

Lynn

Covid-19: Healthy Indoor Air Quality

Healthy Indoor air quality can reduce indoor air pollution and help reduce viruses. Follow the suggestions below from EcoHealthy Child Care to slow the spread of Coronavirus. Increasing the quality of air also helps limit children’s exposures to potentially toxic products used in expanded cleaning and disinfecting protocols.

Remember the basics:

- * Proper ventilation with outside air can help reduce viruses indoors when used with other best practices recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- * Indoor air pollution is often greater than outdoor levels as a result of products used inside.
- * Remember to check the latest advice from state, local, and federal health agencies.
- * Contact Poison Control right away if you suspect a poisoning. Help is available by phone at 1-800-222-1222.

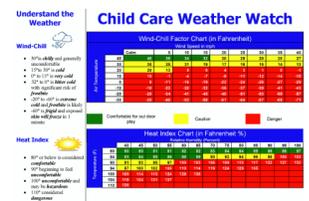
Use these strategies:

- ⇒ Increase ventilation by opening screened windows, doors and using fans. To improve natural ventilation you can open more than one window or door at a time.
- ⇒ If you have a heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system, run the system fan for longer times, or continuously. Ensure your system is properly maintained. Change filters according to the manual. Consider upgrading the HVAC system filter to a higher efficiency filter.
- ⇒ Think about using portable air cleaners or purifiers.
- ⇒ Do not use scented or unscented candles, artificial air fresheners or cleaning products with fragrances. These products contain multiple harmful chemicals. Choose “fragrance-free” instead of “unscented” as the “unscented” label indicates that a fragrance was added to mask other chemical smells.
- ⇒ Use pump sprays or cleaning and/or disinfecting wipes. Avoid all aerosols as they can spew invisible droplets of chemicals into the air. The invisible droplets remain in the air for long periods of time and can be inhaled by children triggering asthma and allergy symptoms.

For more detailed information, visit <https://cehn.org/our-work/eco-healthy-child-care/>.

A downloadable **Child Care Weather Watch** chart is available at <https://www.c-uphd.org/documents/wellness/weatherwatch.pdf>. This chart shows three categories; comfortable, cautious and dangerous temperatures for children’s outdoor play. A useful tool for knowing when it is safe to play outdoors, it provides for both winter and summer temperature extremes.

Remember that being outside is good for everyone’s health, especially to reduce the spread of virus.





CACFP

Contact us at 798-7972 or www.saccn.org
Linda Scimeca ext.203
scimecal@saccn.org
CACFP Educator

AMERICAN BEEF STEW

Beef stew is classic comfort food. If your family has a slow cooker (also known as a Crock-Pot), this is a good time to learn how to use it! In the morning, you can prepare the stew through step 5, then put it in the cooker on low, and it will be ready by dinnertime.

INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoon white whole-wheat flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1 to 1 1/2 pounds beef chuck, cut into 1-inch cubes and patted dry with a paper towel
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 onions, coarsely chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
4 carrots, peeled and chopped (about 2 cups)
3 celery stalks, sliced (about 1 cup)
1/3 pound potatoes (any kind), scrubbed and diced
1 medium-size turnip (about 1/3 pound), scrubbed and diced
1 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme

3 cup low-sodium beef or chicken stock
3/4 cup canned diced tomatoes with their liquid (about half of a 15-ounce can)
2 tablespoon red wine vinegar

INSTRUCTIONS

Wash your hands with soap and water, then gather all your equipment and ingredients and put them on a counter.
Put the flour, salt, and pepper in the bowl and mix well. Add the beef and toss until it is well coated with the flour mixture.
Put the pot on the stove and set the heat to medium. When the pot is hot, add the oil. Very carefully add the beef cubes. Cook, without stirring, until the beef develops a browned crust and releases easily from the pot, about 5 minutes. Carefully stir the beef and turn the pieces over. Cook again without stirring another 3 minutes (you will have browned two sides of the cubes). Turn off the heat and transfer the beef cubes to the plate.
Reheat the pot over medium-low heat and add

the onions, garlic, carrots, and celery and cook, stirring frequently, until the onions have caramelized, turning brown and sweet, about 30 minutes.

Carefully add the reserved beef, potatoes, and turnip. Add the thyme, stock, and tomatoes and stir well.

Set the heat to low and cook partially covered until the beef is tender, about 2 hours.

Add the vinegar and stir well. Taste the stew. Does it need more vinegar? A pinch of salt? If so, add it and taste again.

Serve right away or transfer to a container, cover, and refrigerate up to 2 days.

(Another yummy recipe from the CHOP CHOP website!)



Working with Infants and Toddlers in These Challenging Times



Baby doll play has always been an important part of children's lives. From rag dolls to corn husk dolls to stick dolls, children have found a way to make a doll and take care of it. Why are children drawn to this

kind of play? Children seek to make sense of their world. This starts from the moment they are born. A newborn infant takes in sensory information every moment. They feel your touch or the touch of a soft blanket or of a hard car seat and brain connections are working to use that information to sort things out. By the time children are walking and carrying things they are beginning to show interest in baby dolls. At around 18 months of age, toddlers are "using" baby dolls to process emotions, both good and bad, that they have experienced or witnessed. They are learning about how it feels when important people in their lives hold them, snuggle them, kiss a boo boo and comfort them. They are also processing emotions about how it feels to be told NO when you really want something, to hear a loud stern voice come from their loved one or to have to be away from Mom or Dad and in someone else's care. Baby doll play is an opportunity for infants and toddlers to process the multitude of feelings that occur in a day through play.

Baby dolls are one of the most important toys you can have in a child care program. Different ages of children will use baby dolls in different ways, but each will learn from the other when time and opportunity for rich play experiences exist. It is important for dolls to be accessible to children throughout their day and every day. This is not one of the toys that should be rotated out of the room. You may need to rotate what accessories you offer in order to stimulate more play. For instance, if you have limited space, you may need to alternate when strollers and cradles are available. This will spark a child's imagination and encourage them to continue their important social emotional work through baby dolls. Baby dolls also offer care providers an opportunity to communicate with children. Engaging with young children as they play with baby dolls helps adults model how caring, loving adults should nurture children.

For more information about this topic, watch for future virtual training titled: Social Emotional Learning Using Baby Dolls in Groups.

You can also contact Pam Conine, Infant Toddler Specialist (coninep@saccn.org) to arrange a one hour ZOOM one on one meeting to talk about how you use baby dolls in your program and learn some new ideas. In order to give programs an opportunity to have multi-ethnic baby dolls, the first 10 people to complete a ZOOM meeting with Pam will receive a free set of 4 baby dolls to be used in their program.

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.

Zoom Opportunities

SACCN’s Provider Services Team includes Patty Miller, Pam Conine and Sue Kowaleski. Each Team member has a call list of Group/Family Child Care providers which was developed in March at the start of remote work and several child care program closures. The call lists changed with time and so did the way SACCN partners with providers. Now each team member holds Zoom meetings with their assigned groups, typically monthly. This is a program for Family and Group Family Child Care providers to talk with a small group of provider colleagues who share the same understanding of working in their homes to offer services to children and families. It is an opportunity to talk about the joys and challenges of their most important work.

- ◆ Sue’s FCC Zoom meetings are held monthly, first Wednesdays at 6:00 pm.
- ◆ Pam and Patty are holding their meetings on variable schedules at this point.

Zoom training and professional development classes are now being offered at SACCN.

- CDA classes meet Tuesdays at 6:00 pm through December 22.
- Pam’s infant toddler training is being scheduled often. Invitations are sent via email.
- In lieu of quarterly training that was held in various locations throughout the SACCN service area, more Zoom workshops will be offered. Upcoming dates are unconfirmed at this time. Notice will be sent as soon as topic and dates connect.

November Early Childhood Conference Cancelled

It was a sad decision to cancel the November Early Childhood Conference for 2020. It was made in the concern over everyone’s safety. The Child Care Network is looking into alternatives to the popular, in-person event and hopes to offer other programs to meet the training needs of child care providers in early 2021.

