



Child Care Network

Early Childhood News

Special points of interest:

- ED Letter & EcoHealthy ventilation (page 2)
- CACFP & Infant-Toddler news (page 3)
- Retirement (page 4)

SACCN continues to follow CDC recommendations to slow the spread of the Coronavirus. Anyone having an office appointment must call 518-798-7972 to have a staff person let you into the building.

Please be aware that phone messages left for staff at 518-798-7972 will go to email which staff can access remotely. You must include the staff extensions:

- Lani, ext 208
- Linda, ext 203
- Liz, ext 210
- Lynn, ext 204
- Pam, ext 206
- Patty, ext 211
- Sue, ext 205

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

SACCN Office Closings

May 31: Memorial Day

PROVIDERS! BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR YOUR NEXT RECORD UPDATE REQUEST--ONLINE!

Southern Adirondack Child Care Network has a new child care referral database. EMPIRE STATE CHILD CARE MATCH (CCM) was launched in October 2020.

This system holds and maintains child care provider information for the purpose of furnishing families with accurate and up-to-date child care referrals. Providers work with SACCN's referral staff to update the information in their records on a regular basis.

Previously, SACCN's referral staff periodically outreached to providers via email and postal mail to request updated information. With the new CCM database, we can now implement these same updates online, directly through the database. This will make the process easier, quicker and more accurate for all concerned. Providers will be able to complete and update their records by clicking on a link that comes to them via an email that is generated through the CCM database. A **submit** tab is then clicked for returning the information to SACCN for processing.

A full update of all provider information will be requested during the upcoming summer. Because the full update is more involved, providers will receive additional information about this update prior to the request.

In the meantime, we ask that providers be on the lookout for a brief vacancy update request that will arrive via email. The online link will be located within the email. We anticipate this update request to be sent in early May.

It will be from childcarenetwork@empirestatechildcarematch and the subject line will read: **Response Requested Quick Vacancy Update.** Once the link within the email is opened, the requested information can be completed and submitted.

Please know that while this is one more tool to help keep records up to date, it not intended to replace communications in person or via phone and email. Providers are encouraged to contact our staff at any time with updates or for any other reason. If providers have any questions about the new provider update process and/or would like to update their records at any time in between more formalized updates, please contact Liz Mahon-Laidlaw at laidlawe@saccn.org or by calling 518.792.7978.

American Rescue Plan

Congress recently passed the American Rescue Plan of \$1.9 trillion. Some of these funds, \$39 billion, are earmarked specifically for child care.

A Child Care Aware of America press release stated, "Across the COVID-19 relief packages passed over the past year, child care will have received over \$50 billion in relief during this pandemic. This critical funding will save thousands of providers from permanent closure and help families across the country afford child care. Beyond child care relief, the American Rescue Plan provides the financial support many Americans desperately need to make it through the pandemic.

Although we know that the pandemic pushed the industry to the brink, problems within the child care sector existed long before the pandemic. The funds provided by the American Rescue Plan will help to stabilize the child care sector, but we must commit to building back a better system that is more accessible and affordable to families and offers providers a living wage and benefits. This is an opportunity to transform our child care system. To meet this moment, CCAoA released bold new ideas on how to create an equitable and transformed child care system that is affordable, accessible and provides children the healthy start they need."

New York will be in receipt of millions of child care dollars through the American Rescue Plan. At press time, there were no specific plans released as to the use of these new funds. Advocates urge, "Let's build a child care system for all NY families!"



The Child Care Network's mission:

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

From the Director’s Desk

Passion – a strong liking or devotion to some activity, object or concept.

Dedication – devoted to one’s aims or vocation.

These two words describe so many people in the early childhood field. Early childhood professionals have a passion for the work they do and dedication, doing whatever is necessary, often going above and beyond what is expected.

Sue Kowaleski is one of those passionate, dedicated professionals. Sue will be retiring from SACCN on May 22nd after 29 years of supporting providers, children and families, locally, statewide and nationally. She is part of our provider services team (along with co-workers, Pam Conine and Patty Miller). Many providers who have attended workshops facilitated by Sue

know her level of expertise, her passion for what’s good for children and her humor.

Sue’s work beyond our region is extensive. She is currently or has been an active and engaged member of the following organizations over the course of her career.

- ◆ New York State Child Care Coordinating Council (now Early Care and Learning Council)
- ◆ New York State Association for the Education of Young Children
- ◆ Family Child Care Association of New York State
- ◆ Eco-Healthy Child Care Advisory Board
- ◆ Clean and Healthy New York
- ◆ The Fitzgerald Institute
- ◆ The Governor’s Child Care Availability Task Force

Sue has been my trusted friend and colleague for over 30 years. We have worked side by side since 1992 when SACCN was first established. I will miss seeing her on a daily basis. However, I am thrilled for her as she begins a new journey in retirement. Sue shares some of her plans on the back page. I am also happy to share that her passion and devotion won’t quite let her fully leave us. She will still be with us on a limited basis offering workshops in the coming months.

Please take a minute to send her congratulatory wishes at suek@saccn.org.

The season of growth is upon us. Stay tuned for more information regarding changes at SACCN.

Happy Spring

Lynn

Ventilation Makes a Difference in Keeping People Healthy

With warmer weather coming soon, it will be easier to practice some of the most powerful strategies in preventing the spread of Coronavirus. By circulating air in the early childhood environment, several good things happen. A recent webinar shared research showing that among other proactive practices to keep Covid 19 from spreading, air quality had a huge impact given that child care programs are already good at disinfecting, especially when they use safer disinfectants and use them only when necessary and required. “Air flow or ventilation is a key but often overlooked prevention practice!”

There are several low cost, simple ventilation strategies that can be done to dilute airborne contaminants.

Bring fresh, outdoor air into the space to help keep virus particles from accumulating inside.

- If it’s safe to do so, **open doors and windows** as much as possible to bring in fresh, outdoor air. While it’s better to open them wide, even having a window cracked open slightly can help.

Use child safe fans to improve air flow.

- Place a **fan as close as possible** to an open window blowing outside. This helps get rid of virus particles inside by blowing air outside. Even without an open window, fans can improve air flow.
- **Point fans away from people.** Pointing fans toward people can possibly cause contaminated air to flow directly at them.
- Use **ceiling fans** to help improve air flow whether or not windows are open.

Filter the air to eliminate airborne particles at bay.

- If the building (home or center) has a central heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system that has a filter, do the following to help trap virus particles.
 - ⇒ Use as directed
 - ⇒ Follow the maintenance instructions provided with the unit.
 - ⇒ Change filters as directed
- Exhaust fans above your stovetop and in your bathroom that vent outdoors **can help move air outside.** Although some stove exhaust fans don’t send the air to the outside, they can still improve air flow and keep virus particles from being concentrated in one place.

Consider using a portable air cleaner to help rid the air of contaminants.

https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2018-07/documents/guide_to_air_cleaners_in_the_home_2nd_edition.pdf has guidance for choosing the right product for the right setting.

Spend more time outside in the fresh air to capture natural benefits.

- Happy springtime!

See <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html> for more information.



CACFP

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



Here is a nice brunch recipe that is great for when we can have family gatherings again! It would also work well to serve children in child care! I'm not sure where the recipe came from, it has been in my "family" cookbook, and I have made it for many years. It has also proved a favorite at SACCN staff brunches in the past!

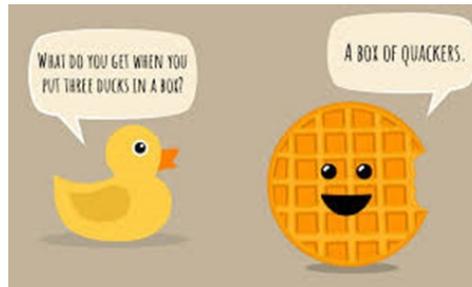
Brunch Egg Casserole

Ingredients

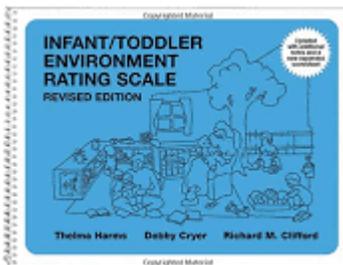
4 cups Bread cubes (about 6 slices of toasted bread, torn into cubes)
8 oz. Cheddar cheese, shredded (2 cups)
8 Eggs
4 cups Milk
1 tsp. Salt
1 tsp. Prepared mustard
¼ tsp. Onion powder
1 1/8 tsp. Pepper
Bacon, Cooked, enough slices to crumble up and sprinkle atop casserole as desired

Directions

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Spread toasted bread cubes across bottom of greased 13x9 inch baking pan or casserole dish. Sprinkle cheese over bread. In a separate bowl, blend together eggs (slightly beaten), milk, salt, mustard, onion powder, and pepper. Pour mixture over bread and cheese.
Bake at 325 degrees until eggs set, about 45-55 minutes.
Add crumbled bacon 10 minutes prior to completion.



Improving Infant Toddler Environments using the Infant Toddler Environmental Rating Scale (ITERS)



Have you ever wondered what you could be doing better when it comes to caring for the infants and toddlers in your program? Is it hard to figure out where to start? The good news is in the Infant Toddler Environmental Rating Scale developed by Thelma

Harms, Debby Cryer and Richard M Clifford. By continually assessing and revising your environment to provide the best for infants and toddlers, you are promoting optimal development for each individual child.

The ITERS scale is meant to be used in center-based programs for assessment and goal development in individual classrooms. However, used as a self-improvement tool, it can be a great resource for all modalities. The tool covers 7 areas of infant toddler care including: space and furnishings, personal care routines, listening and talking, activities, interaction, program structure, and parents and staff. Each area has sub-categories which

are scored as the program is observed. There are 39 sub-categories that dig deeper each area. The scale uses a range from 1 to 7 which scores an item from inadequate to minimal to good to excellent. When using the scale as a self-improvement tool it is a good idea to have someone outside of your program do the first observation. But it can also be used to see what would provide an excellent environment for these young children. For instance: when setting up a dramatic play area, the scale gives you specific information on what would make that area score a 7 (excellent). This includes that props provided represent diversity, that props are provided for toddlers to active dramatic play outdoors or in other large areas, and that staff pretend with children in play. There are many variations in-between the score of inadequate and excellent to focus on in each category.

Be watching for more information on upcoming trainings for using the ITERS in your program. Participants in training will receive a free ITERS booklet which is a \$25 value. Please contact Pam Conine to let her know if you would like to attend a training about the ITERS soon. coninep@saccn.org.

Going, Going,...Almost gone!

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.



In 1988 when both of my sons were under two years old, I responded to an ad for part time work in the field of early childhood; a job that fit nicely with my education and experience. I learned to follow a statewide curriculum to offer training to family child care providers in Warren, Washington and Rensselaer Counties with the goal of forming an organization that would fill the gap in those counties where no CCRR (Child Care Resource and Referral) existed. Four years later, the Southern Adirondack Child Care Network was formed.

Since then I have been fortunate to enjoy working locally, statewide and nationally in the field of early childhood. I am proud to have met so many wonderful child care professionals; colleagues and friends who have shaped my thinking and expanded my horizons. I love the work that I do!

Although I have been looking forward to retirement for many years, now that it is close, I find it hard to leave early childhood behind to spend more time working on our family farm. It will be nice to have more time to help with maple sugaring at this time of year, more time to enjoy growing my 37 varieties of garlic, more time to pull weeds and mow grasses. It will be hard to stop meeting with people who care so deeply for children, hard to stop seeking new ideas to enjoy sharing with the field, hard to imagine my life with joy that must come from a different place, hard to change the routine that has been my life for so many years. My parting hope is that I have impacted the lives of children through the adults that know me. May my words, deeds and actions continue to inspire greatness in others.

Leaving is hard for me. Although "retired," I will continue some of my work at the Child Care Network on a very limited basis while transitions fall into place.

