

## Congratulations are in order for the following centers:

### New Accreditations:

- IRS Child Development, New Carrollton, MD
- Children's House, HUD, Washington, DC
- Kids by the Bay, San Francisco, CA

### Reaccreditations:

- Corporate Kids CCC, Kansas City, MO
- Custom House Children's Center, Denver, CO
- Growing Years Child Development Center, Seattle, WA

85%  
of GSA Child Care Centers  
are Accredited

First Lady, from page 1

Afterwards, Mrs. Obama and Secretary Solis served the children an assortment of intriguing, but very healthy, snacks that were created by local Job Corps Culinary students on hand for the festivities. Some of the biggest hits were cereal necklaces, strawberries, and "Ants on a Log" made with soy nut butter. The children wrapped up a valuable learning experience by making a recipe book of their own favorite healthy foods.



Eileen, from page 1

In recognition of her outstanding accomplishments throughout her career, Eileen received the GSA Administrator's Exceptional Service Award. She was also honored with the Regional Administrator's Award for her invaluable contributions to GSA's Northeast-Caribbean Region.

Though she will be missed, we all wish her the happiest of retirements, as she relaxes out at her beach house, travels the world a bit, and most importantly, spends lots of time with her family, especially those four beautiful grandchildren that she is so crazy about.

**BOARD'S BUSINESS**  
by Jill Rhea

**Four Tips to Keep Great Volunteers**  
The New Year has come and gone and we are well into 2010! With the economy still struggling to recover, using volunteers can be a helpful strategy to keep our child care centers viable. Here are a few tips for your volunteer program:

1. Identify a volunteer coordinator on your board (maybe the child care center director). There should be one point person for all of the child care center volunteers.
2. Identify tasks volunteers can do, write job descriptions, including the number of hours expected, and the necessary qualifications.
3. Create a "hiring" process for your volunteers that includes a screening procedure and a way to compassionately end the relationship, if necessary.
4. Develop a plan for volunteer recognition and appreciation.

## GSA Child Care Division

National Director  
Liz Themelis  
216.522.4963

Jennifer Fee  
202.208.3810

Jacki Fling  
303.236.8000 x2264

Magda Marcano  
212.264.1268

Nancy Norris  
404.331.1851

Jill Rhea  
215.446.4639

Ania Shapiro  
202.208.7047

newsletter  
Linda Auriemma  
212-264-0514  
linda.auriemma@gsa.gov

U.S. General Services  
Administration  
PBS Child Care Division  
1800 F Street, NW  
Washington DC 20405  
www.gsa.gov/childcare

GSA

GSA Public Buildings Service  
Child Care Division

# Center News

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A Newsletter for Federal Child Care Centers

Winter 2010

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## Michelle Obama Visits Federal Child Care Center

On January 14, 2010, Michelle Obama, accompanied by Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis, visited the Department of Labor's Child Development Center in Washington D.C. where she toured the school and read the Dr. Seuss classic, "Green Eggs and Ham" to a group of 4 and 5 year old children.



The theme around the visit was "Healthy Eating." After reading the story, the First Lady asked the children to promise to try new foods, and then answered the many questions the students asked of her. In her answers, she revealed the "First Dog," Bo, does not like pizza; her daughters enjoy playing on their computers and swing set in their spare time; the family does not own horses; and her birthday was a few days away and she would be turning 48.

continued on page 4.



Children of Club Fed, Albany, N.Y. - "We did it!!! After 10 years, we finally won first place in the Annual Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building Chili Cook Off!"

## Eileen Stern, Director of GSA's Child Care Program, Retires

After 42 years of exemplary and dedicated public service, Eileen Stern retired on December 31, 2009. Without a doubt, we all owe her a tremendous debt of gratitude, because, without her, GSA Child Care would not be the model program that it is today. Under Eileen's leadership, child care for federal workers developed and expanded to become a shining example of excellence recognized by both the public and private sectors. continued on page 4.



## Contact your Regional Child Care Coordinator

New England Region  
Sherri Edwards  
617.565.7312

Mid-Atlantic Region  
Robyn Major  
215.446.2893

Great Lakes Region  
Brenda Roldan  
312.353.5597

Greater Southwest Region  
BJ Upton  
817.978.8451

Pacific Rim Region  
Jennifer Kroon  
415.522.3481

Northeast  
Caribbean Region  
Linda Auriemma  
212.264.0514  
Magda Marcano  
212.264.1268

Southeast Sunbelt Region  
Vicki Ivory  
404.562.0671

The Heartland Region  
Dara Lamb  
816.823.2213  
Rebecca Mausbach  
816.823.5801

Rocky Mountain Region  
Jacki Fling  
303.236.8000 x2264

Northwest/Arctic Region  
Emily Friddle  
253.931.7147

National Capital Region  
Leo Bonner  
202.401.7403

## More Information

Contributions and Comments on Center News are welcome and encouraged. Want to receive this Newsletter electronically? Sign up at [www.gsa.gov/childcare](http://www.gsa.gov/childcare)

## SAFETY RECALLS - CRIBS, STROLLERS, WINDOW SHADES

### Infant Entrapment and Suffocation Prompts Recall of Drop-Side Cribs

On November 23, 2009, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), in cooperation with Stork Craft Manufacturing Inc., of British Columbia, Canada, announced the voluntary recall of more than 2.1 million Stork Craft drop-side cribs, including about 147,000 Stork Craft drop-side cribs with the Fisher-Price logo. The recall involves approximately 1,213,000 units distributed in the United States and 968,000 units distributed in Canada.

The CPSC has urged parents and caregivers to immediately stop using the recalled cribs, wait for the free repair kit, and do not attempt to fix the cribs without the kit. They should find an alternative, safe sleeping environment for their baby. Consumers should contact Stork Craft to receive a free repair kit that converts the drop-side on these cribs to a fixed side.

The cribs' drop-side plastic hardware can break, deform, or parts can become missing. In addition, the drop-side can be installed upside-down, which can result in broken or disengaged plastic parts. All of these problems can cause the drop-side to detach in one or more corners. When the drop-side detaches, it creates space between the drop-side and the crib mattress. The bodies of infants and toddlers can become entrapped in the space which can lead to suffocation. Complete detachment of drop-sides can lead to falls from the crib.

The recall does not involve any cribs that do not have a drop-side, and does not involve any cribs with metal rod drop-side hardware. It involves only those cribs with plastic trigger and one-

hand-system drop-side hardware.

The recall includes Stork Craft cribs with manufacturing and distribution dates between January 1993 and October 2009, and Stork Craft cribs with the Fisher-Price logo that have manufacturing dates between October 1997 and December 2004. The manufacture date, model number, crib name, country of origin, and the firm's name, address, and contact information are located on the assembly instruction sheet attached to the mattress support board. The firm's insignia "storkcraft baby" or "storkling" is inscribed on the drop-side teething rail of some cribs. In Stork Craft cribs that contain the "Fisher-Price" logo, this logo can be found on the crib's teething rail, in the manufacturer's instructions, on the assembly instruction sheet attached to the mattress support board, and on the end panels of the Twinkle-Twinkle and Crystal crib models.

Major retailers in the United States and Canada sold the recalled cribs - including BJ's Wholesale Club, J.C. Penney, Kmart, Meijer, Sears, USA Baby, a21stnd Wal-Mart stores and online at Amazon.com, Babiesrus.com, Costco.com, Target.com, and Walmart.com from January 1993 through October 2009 for between \$100 and \$400.

For additional information, contact Stork Craft toll-free at (877) 274-0277 anytime to order the free repair kit, or log on to [www.storkcraft.com](http://www.storkcraft.com)

To see this recall on CPSC's web site, including pictures of the recalled product, please go to: <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prhtml10/10046.html>

The day after this massive recall was announced, Suffolk County, Long Island, New York passed a ban on the sale of all drop-side cribs within Suffolk county. This law, went into effect beginning February 2010 and it prohibits the sale of any crib with a side that moves up and down.

Since the Stork Craft recall, millions more

drop-side and non drop-side cribs have been recalled. Included are crib designs made by Caramia Furniture and drop-side and non drop-side Dorel Asis Cribs which were sold in K Mart, Sears, and Walmart from January 2005 - December 2009.

### Strollers Recalled Due to Risk of Finger Amputation and Laceration Hazards

About a million Macclaren strollers sold by Target and Babies R Us and other stores around the country since 1999 were recalled on November 10, 2009 - after 12 reports of children having their fingertips amputated by a hinge mechanism. The recall includes all nine models of single and double umbrella strollers. The company is offering free hinge covers to prevent future accidents. Consumers have been told to contact Macclaren at 877-688-2326 or through the web site at <http://recall.macclaren.us/> for more information.

### Roman Blind and Shade Recall - Strangulation Hazard

Risk of strangulation of children has prompted the recall of several types of roller blinds and Roman shades:

- IKEA Roller Blinds named ISDANS, TUPPLUR, and ENJE
- Roman Shades by Whole Space, sold exclusively by Hanover Direct/Domestications
- Roman Shades by Louis Hornick & Co., sold exclusively at Bed, Bath & Beyond

Consumers can obtain detailed recall and general safety information on a wide range of products either by logging on to CPSC's Web site at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov) or calling the CPSC Recall Hotline: (800) 638-2772. It is strongly recommended that caregivers and parents sign up for free email recall notices by subscribing at <https://www.cpsc.gov/cpsclist.aspx>.



## Eco-Healthy Child Care

### De-Icing Products: Keep Out of Reach of Children

Many de-icing products on the market, including commonly used sodium chloride, could pose a risk to children, pets, plants and waterways. Materials can be tracked into child care centers on shoes presenting opportunity to naturally curious children who explore their world through taste and touch. Their sense of wonder puts children at greater risk for exposure to environmental hazards. Salt based ice melts can irritate eyes and ingestion can cause kidney damage and stomach problems. Direct contact with skin can cause dermatitis, rashes or blistering. Therefore, if you need to purchase a de-icer, search for the least toxic product available.

Eco-Healthy Child Care tips to reduce de-icing product exposure:

- Keep a rough mat at the door or have a shoe-free policy.
- Find ways to encourage prompt snow removal.
- Apply it in small amounts and apply it early (to avoid using too much).
- Calcium-magnesium acetate is an ice melter that is easier on the environment than rock salt.
- Be wary of "eco-friendly" de-icers - they may genuinely minimize risks to plants and waterways, but it's not a free pass for being safe for children.

### Batteries: Keep it Green

Batteries contain heavy metals such as mercury, lead, cadmium, and nickel, which can contaminate the environment when batteries are disposed of improperly. Batteries that end up in landfills and incinerators eventually end up in our environment and/or the food chain, causing serious health risks to humans and animals. On average, each person in the United States discards eight dry-cell batteries (such as 9-volt, D, C, AA, AAA, button) per year.

One way to reduce the number of batteries in the waste stream is to purchase rechargeable batteries. Over its useful life, each rechargeable battery may substitute for hundreds of single-use batteries.

- Replace single-use batteries with rechargeables (but remember that they also contain heavy metals such as nickel-cadmium.)
- Many states have regulations in place requiring battery recycling.
- Check with your property manager to see if battery recycling options are available in your building.
- Many local retailers (such as Best Buy, Office Depot, RadioShack, Sears) will recycle most types of batteries. Check out this site to find battery recycling locations: <http://www.call2recycle.org/home.php?c=t&w=1&r=Y>

For more information visit:

- [http://www.greeningschools.org/resources/view\\_cat\\_teacher.cfm?id=193](http://www.greeningschools.org/resources/view_cat_teacher.cfm?id=193)
- <http://www.ehso.com/ehshome/batteries.php>
- <http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserves/materials/battery.htm>
- <http://earth911.com/hazardous/single-use-batteries/>

Did you know you can raise funds while recycling? Check out these websites for more programs that pay you to recycle batteries, electronic waste, cell phones, and printer cartridges:

- <http://www.thinkrecycle.com>
- <http://stepbystepfundraising.com/recycling-fundraiser-a-success/>
- <http://www.phoneraiser.com/>
- <http://www.empties4cash.com>
- <http://www.green2liveclean.com/>
- <http://www.championforchildren.com/>
- <http://www.racetorecycle.com/index.asp>

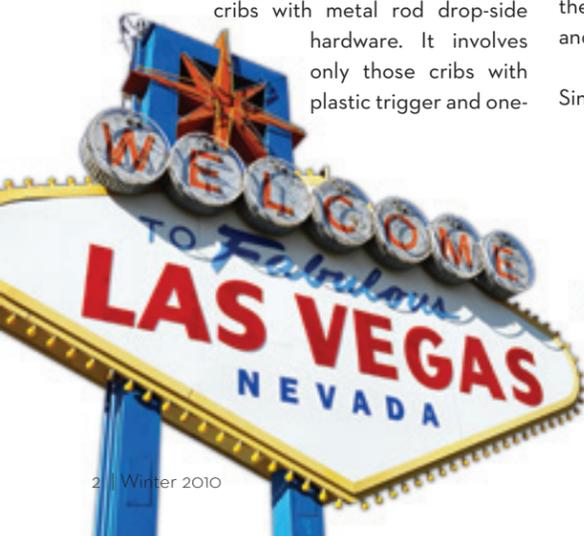
### Be a Planet Protector!

The Planet Protectors Club is an EPA program for children (K-12) designed to improve the world around them by making less trash. Educational materials are provided to encourage children to find ways to make less trash and learn to reduce, reuse and recycle. <http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/education/kids/planetprotectors/index.htm>

Thank you for your commitment to making child care centers more environmentally-friendly. GSA Child Care Centers are now 95% Eco-Healthy endorsed. Just 5 more centers to go, so please keep up the great work.

Congratulations to the following centers which have received Eco-Healthy endorsement this quarter:

- Social Security Child Care Center/Metro West, Baltimore MD
- Social Security Child Care Center/ Woodlawn, Baltimore, MD
- Just US Kids, St Louis MO
- Childtime Learning Center, Cincinnati, OH
- Jamaica Kids, Jamaica, NY
- Sound Start, Philadelphia, PA
- Columbia Federal Center, Columbia, SC
- Uncle Sam's, Louisville, KY
- Little Acorns Jackson, MS
- Social Security Child Development Center, Birmingham, AL
- Everett M. Dirksen Courthouse, Chicago, IL
- Uncle Sam's Federal Child Care, Des Moines, IA
- Uncle Sam's, Kansas City, KS
- Corporate Kids, Kansas City, MO
- Rainbow Castle, St Louis MO
- Harry Peggerson Child Care, Los Angeles, CA
- Cottage Kids, Sacramento, CA
- DOT Child Development Center, Washington DC
- FERC Child Development Center, Washington DC



21ST ANNUAL GSA CHILD CARE TRAINING CONFERENCE  
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA JULY 13-15, 2010

### More Information

Eco-Healthy Child Care is a national program created by the Oregon Environmental Council to ensure that child care settings are as healthy, safe and green as possible by reducing children's exposure to toxins. GSA is proud to partner with the Oregon Environmental Council in support of child care centers going green. If you want to know more on the EHCC Program, contact your Regional Child Care Coordinator or visit [www.oeconline.org/our-work/kidshealth/ehc](http://www.oeconline.org/our-work/kidshealth/ehc)