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Congratulations and Thank You!!!!!!!

Judy Johnston
Director, Federal Childcare Center of Northern Virginia

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Janet Zarich
Toddler Coordinator
Kinderplatz, Fort Snelling, MN
13 years tenure

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• Kinderplatz, Fort Snelling, MN

T onight we celebrate our accomplishments and success together. Tomorrow it’s back to the work we do…loving, teaching and molding the future!

Fallon Federal Child Development Center Moves to New Space

The Fallon center in Baltimore, MD recently moved from leased space to newly renovated playground. This project was a joint effort funded by GSA and the State Department. The new playground consists of Diplotots Village, which includes a music store with a variety of usable instruments, a preschool structure with multiple play options, a play house, and a sand box with a simulated rock stream. Guest speakers at the ceremony were Ambassador Harry K. Thomas Jr. for the State Department and GSA Assistant Regional Administrator Bart Bush. Both speakers addressed the benefits that children from the center would have in playing in this new outside environment. Children from the child care center and their parents helped Ambassador Thomas and ARA Bush cut the ribbon.

The GSA Nationwide Network of Child Care Coordinators

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Fallon Federal Child Development Center Moves to New Space

Volunteer

13 years tenure

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A Sneak Peak into the 19th Annual GSA Child Care Conference!

By Jill Rhea

Being on the Board of Directors for your child care center is a challenge! GSA supports your efforts to create a strong board. This year’s conference will be held July 8 – 10, 2008 in beautiful San Francisco, California and includes a Board Track that will address many timely issues to help you navigate the changes and challenges your nonprofit faces.

Currently the Board Track includes Roger Neugebauer, publisher, Exchange Press, Inc who will present “Why Boards Don’t Work, How They Should Work” - “Not So Scary After All” will be a financial management session. Other fast-paced workshop topics include strategic planning for boards, attracting and retaining board members and the ever popular fundraising session!

Join us for stimulating discussions, learning and networking. This will be a conference worth attending. We look forward to seeing you in the City by the Bay!

19th Annual GSA Child Care Training Conference

July 8-10, 2008
Parc 55 Hotel, 55 Cyril Magnin Street, Market at Fifth, San Francisco, California

The conference will begin Tuesday afternoon with meetings with Regional Child Care Coordinators and the Welcome Reception and Cornerstone Awards. There will be breakout sessions and a luncheon on the 9th and 10th with the conference ending at 5 PM on July 10. Timothy R. Shope, MD, MPH will conduct a general session fighting the war on germs: “Spit Happens.”

Tours of the new San Francisco Federal Building are being built into the conference schedule. Tours will require Government issued picture identification with individual’s names pre-vetted for security reasons.

Conference Registration Fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Early Bird</th>
<th>After June 14, 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers/ Caregivers</td>
<td>$215</td>
<td>$240</td>
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<tr>
<td>Directors/ Assistant Directors</td>
<td>$275</td>
<td>$300</td>
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<tr>
<td>All Others</td>
<td>$340</td>
<td>$365</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Hotel reservations can be made by calling the hotel at 1.800.595.0507, ask for the “GSA Child Care Training Conference” room block. The daily rate is $152.00 plus tax, single/double occupancy (each additional adult is $20) and children 18 and under are free. The hotel reservation cutoff date is June 14, 2008 and the conference rate will be honored three day pre and one day post based on availability at the time of reservation.

For the most up-to-date information, visit our website at www.gsa.gov/childcare or call the conference hotline at 202.501.3965.

This year has been one of the most meaningful years for me as the staff worked toward achieving national accreditation. Accreditation is not something that is achieved in a short period of time. It is a process that can take more than a year to complete. Even though I have been through this process several times before, this time was different. The standards seemed much higher and as a staff we put a lot more work into meeting certain goals than we ever had before.

In the fall of 2005 each classroom started evaluating their area. In the toddler program when we went over the required criteria we were initially pleased to realize we were already meeting most of the criteria. In the summer of 2006 we started having frequent classroom meetings. The two toddler rooms met together and decided the main goal we needed to focus on was bringing more culture into the classrooms. We felt the best way to do this was by getting to know more about the families in our classroom. In the fall of 2006 we implemented tooth brushing into our daily routine. At first this seemed like an entirely big deal. We wondered how we were going to get it into our after lunch routine. How would we possibly get all those teeth brushed on top of everything else that needed to be done? We adjusted the routine as needed and soon it felt like something we had always done.

In 2007 we changed our way of lesson planning as we learned about the Creative Curriculum. Each week we set individual goals for the children and based our activities on their needs, strengths, and interests. The Creative Curriculum also includes formally assessing the children several times each year. This has been another new criteria which took time for us to learn and implement.

As we approached summer we knew that we would have to provide some sort of portfolio for accreditation, but didn’t know what it would entail. We started taking pictures of everything we were doing; art activities, music time, children playing, etc. Eventually we found out what was required. I have to admit I was overwhelmed at first. The portfolio needed to include evidence for a thick packet of criteria. As teachers we needed to have evidence to prove that we were meeting each criteria. Evidence includes pictures, lesson plans, letters to families, etc. Putting together the portfolio was one of the biggest jobs I have ever had to do. I haven’t worked so hard since college. Yet in the end, once it was completed, the portfolio has become a great source of pride for me. It made me really stop and think about everything my co-worker and I were doing in our classroom. We couldn’t just say we were doing something in our room. We had to prove it.

The last step in the accreditation process was preparing for the validation visit. We spent a lot of time talking about what it would be like when the validator came. Finally it was the...
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Want to receive this Newsletter electronically? Sign up at www.gsa.gov/childcare

Center News

Of the GSA centers eligible for NAEYC Accreditation, 84% are now accredited.

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- Dirkson Baby Room, Chicago, IL, managed by CEC Learning Centers
- Kinderplatz, Fort Snelling, MN
- AFC Child Enrichment Center, Atlanta, GA, managed by Easter Seals
- Y’s Time, St. Albans, VT, managed by the YMCA
- Kathy Herward Center, Andover, MA

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Center News

National Capital Region Celebrates the Diplotots Playground Renovation

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