

Network News

Child Care Resource Center Newsletter



A MESSAGE FROM CCRC DIRECTOR

By Jenn Perney

At the end of each year, the Child Care Resource Center surveys the child care provider community on a variety of things, including their professional development and training needs for the next year. Without fail, we always get comments expressing frustrations with the requirements for training.

As you are aware, OCFS requires registered and licensed child care providers to have ongoing professional development and training. You need to have 30 hours every 2 years in all 10 topics areas. We can't change the requirement and take away the need for training. We are here to assist you in meeting this requirement. We want to offer topics that interest you so you want to come to trainings. Coming out to an in-person training offers so much more than just sitting and listening to someone speak. It offers you a chance to network with other providers and possibly have a fun night out with other adults. This year, we are offering a new incentive program to encourage you to come to our trainings. (You can read more about that on the next page of this newsletter.)

Don't just take the same old online trainings to complete your hours. Sure, you meet the requirement and get them done quickly. But invest more into your child care program and career! Make your New Year's Resolution to come to a monthly training. You can see the latest quarterly training calendar on our [website](#). If you don't see something you need, let us know so we can add it to the next calendar.

Newsletter Highlights

Training Information

CACFP Recipe

ACEs

Routines

Years of Service

Sensory Activities

Building Your Bounce

Cold Weather

Fine Motor Skills

Low Enrollment?

Play!



ANNOUNCING A NEW TRAINING ATTENDANCE INCENTIVE

Do you attend CCRC-run professional development opportunities regularly? If not, 2025 might be the year to start! Starting in January 2025 Family Enrichment Network's CCRC will offer incentives for attending professional development opportunities through a quarterly raffle drawing. Each time you attend a training we will enter your name in a raffle drawing and at the end of the quarter we will draw a name to win a prize. Get your OCFS-required training and win cool prizes; it's a win-win situation!

Not getting the most updated training calendars and information? Contact Rachel Dowd at ext. 894 or rdowd@familyenrichment.org to be added to our mailing list.

ONGOING TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Why should you take different training opportunities? There is always something new to learn. New research shows us new information or different ways to do things. Stay up to date on the latest developments in the field of early childhood education. Grow as a professional in your career. As trends are constantly changing, learn new ways to work with children, new skills and new techniques.

We should always strive for the best quality care for our future generation. Remember, what you do every day matters and makes a difference to this world!

Sign up for an upcoming training using our [online portal](#).

EARLY CHILDHOOD FALL CONFERENCE

Family Enrichment Network held it's second annual Early Childhood Educators Fall Conference on Monday, October 14, 2024 in Binghamton.

There were almost 130 child care staff from area child care centers in attendance for the full day professional development opportunity.

The event offered a keynote presentation delivered by national speaker, [Mike Veny](#) and 20 breakout sessions on various topics relevant for the early childhood field.

Save the date for the 2025 conference and add the day to your professional development calendar now! Monday, October 13, 2025!



VROOM

By Rachel Dowd, Training & Coaching Specialist

Check out this Vroom tip to try out this Winter!

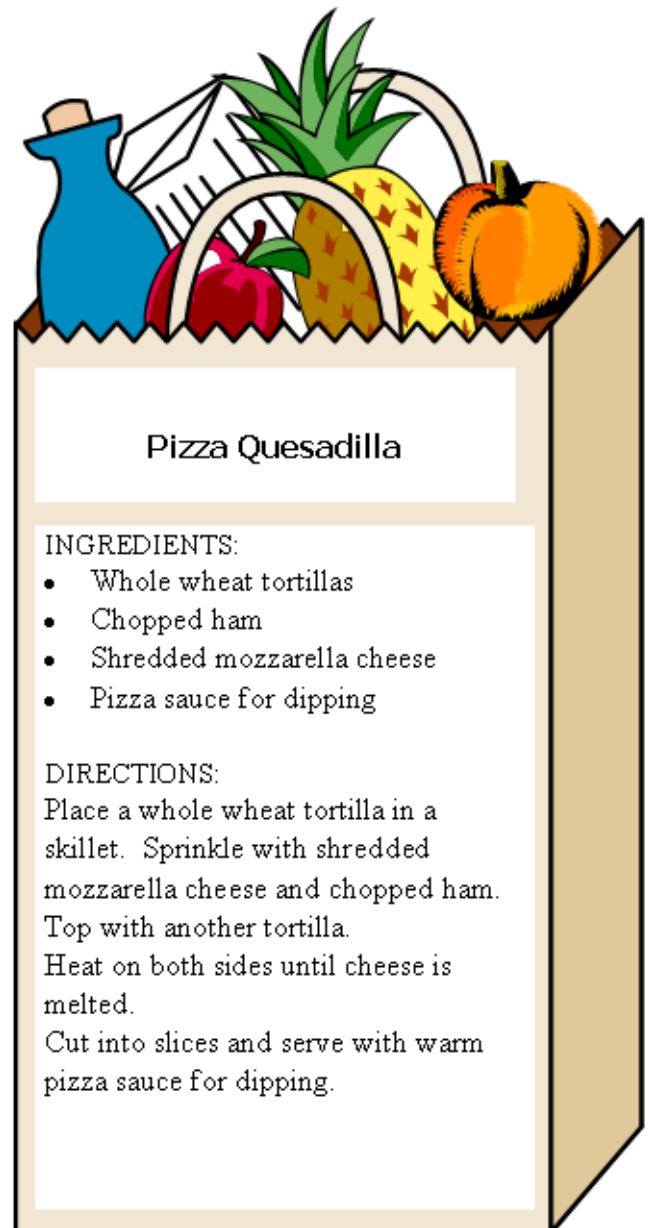
Yes Places

Your child needs places they can explore without hearing "No." Give them things they can use to learn safely, like cardboard or wooden spoons. Child-proof spaces or "Yes Places" also let you say "Yes." When you save your "No's" for when you really need them, it helps your baby learn what "No" really means.

Brainy Background

For your baby to learn what "No" means, try not to use it so often. Babies need to explore - it's how they figure out the world and how it works. "Yes Places" help them learn and help you save "No" for when you really need it. It might help them learn to say "No" less often, too!

Interested in more Vroom tips like this? Visit vroom.org or download their app for daily brain-building tips!



ACES AND TENDING THE ROOTS

By Rachel Dowd, Training and Coaching Specialist

Did you know that over two-thirds of people surveyed in the original Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) study by the CDC-Kaiser Permanente team indicated that they had experienced at least one ACE during their childhood (before the age of 18)? The majority of people in the study had suffered from some sort of abuse, neglect, or household dysfunction all before the age of 18. This means that the likelihood of a friend, colleague, or child you work with living with the effects of childhood trauma is quite high!

ACEs have long-term health effects for people including increased drug use, severe obesity, heart disease, depression, cancer, and more. So how can we, as childcare providers, help prevent ACEs and prevent the long-term health consequences associated with them? The first step is learning more about ACEs and understanding childhood trauma. Trainings like ACEs 101, 201, and 301 are great options to help increase your knowledge of ACEs and their effects. Beyond training, you can visit the CDC website to explore updated ACEs information and videos: <https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/aces/>

The more we understand trauma the better we can support those who experience it. For a more in-depth look at trauma on the broader spectrum consider scheduling a Tending the Roots training for your program. This training is offered through Family Enrichment Network on behalf of the New York State Office of Mental Health as a way to increase trauma-informed knowledge across the state.

The Tending the Roots training helps people and organizations understand toxic stress, trauma, and how they can affect everyone. This class also talks about how racism, parts of our environment (like our neighborhoods and schools), and tough experiences are connected, and how things like fairness and justice affect our health. You will also learn about things that can help you and others bounce back from hard experiences. By the end of the program, you will have the knowledge and tools to create safe and supportive spaces for yourself and others to build a healthier and fairer world.

Ready to become a more trauma-informed program that decreases the negative impact of ACEs? Contact Rachel Dowd at ext. 894 or rdowd@familyenrichment.org to schedule an ACEs or Tending the Roots training.



BREASTFEEDING FRIENDLY PROGRAMS

Congratulations to the following for recently obtaining the Breastfeeding Friendly Designee:

Melanie Shauger

Emilee Komarisky

Rose DeAngelis

The Academy for Young Scholars - Anna Raheem

STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH EVERYDAY ROUTINES

By: Traci Decker, Infant Toddler Mental Health Specialist

As we enter the New Year, many of us are focused on new beginnings and changes that support our health and happiness in 2025. Starting and keeping resolutions is a positive and commendable activity, especially for early childhood professionals who need and deserve self-care! So while we take on the effort of setting and committing to fresh goals and behaviors, let's also remember that there is also "magic" in those old, ordinary, everyday routines.

Changing diapers, feeding infants, washing hands and other daily tasks of the early childhood educator are often viewed as something to "check off" the list. However, these common, repetitive activities are opportunities to strengthen the relationships we have with the children in our care. By transforming small, regular 1:1 interactions into meaningful connections with infants and toddlers, we impact them in wonderful ways! "We accomplish this by weaving intentional rituals into some of these basic routines, resulting in children feeling seen, loved, safe and secure. It is through safe, secure relationships we support the healthy social-emotional development of children. For infants and toddlers, the predictability of a routine builds trust, reassures them their needs will be met and helps them relax, explore and grow.

According to Dr. Becky Bailey, Ph.D., author of "I Love You Rituals," adding a ritual, such as a finger play, positive rhyme, song, or a soothing game to a routine, "primes children's brains for learning, helps children cope with change, enhances attention, cooperation and self-esteem and helps busy adults stay close with children in their care." Here are some of Dr. Bailey's suggestions:

- Diapering – make this 1:1 time special by engaging with some simple visuals hung near the diapering table. Small posters with a rhyme or interactive song make this task more appealing and playful. An older infant or toddler can even pick the song or rhyme from the selection of visuals.
- Drop off / greeting – a simple, warm way of welcoming a child into the classroom is to ask, "What did you bring to school today?" Then do a little inventory while identifying and pointing to their nose, their tiny hands, their cute little ears and so on...fully connecting!

Would you like some personalized support developing routines and rituals? Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) consultation is a free early intervention that benefits children ages 0 – 5, by pairing a mental health professional with an early childhood educator to support children's social, emotional and behavioral health. The intended goals of this service are to reduce challenging behaviors, improve children's social-emotional skills, decrease stress and burnout in early childhood educators, reduce expulsion, improve the overall health of classrooms / programs...and more! Please contact Traci Decker (607) 723-8313 x 714 or tdecker@familyenrichment.org for more information!



FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDERS YEARS OF SERVICE

CELEBRATING YEARS OF SERVICE

Congratulations to the following providers who are celebrating years of service in the months of January, February, and March!

Chenango County

Amy Bohndorf – 11 years
Kathleen Duncan – 24 years
Lisa Unkel – 22 years
Kristi Favorito – 11 years
Micah Boyd- 3 years

Broome County

Valerie Antonakas – 19 years
Amara Arshad – 8 years
Bonnie Boczulak – 28 years
Kiminu Goodson - 2 years
Diana Starks – 19 years
Tressa Imhotep – 5 years
Deborah Young – 22 years
Kristy Hanyon – 4 years
Christine Schell – 5 years
Oliva Folkes – 2 years
Julie Skojec – 11 years
Mary Wood – 31 years

Tioga County

Pam Arnold – 25 years
Kim Holland - 8 years
Stacey Thorp – 20 years
Catherine Westfall – 29 years
Holly Houston – 5 years
Emilee Komarisky – 2 years

LITTLE LAUGHS

Laughter Boosts Mood and Reduces Stress: Laughing with kids helps release stress, and winter jokes can be a bright spot on cold, dark days. For children, laughter boosts mood, which can be particularly important during the shorter winter months.

Try these jokes with your kids:

- What do polar bears eat for lunch? Ice burgers!
- What's a snowman's favorite snack? Ice Krispies Treats!
- What kind of ball doesn't bounce? A snowball!
- What is the best breakfast cereal to eat in the winter? Frosted Flakes!

SENSORY ACTIVITIES FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

By: Cortney Nornhold, Infant Toddler Specialist

Young children are born ready to learn and they learn through play. They explore their environment using their senses. This idea can also be referred to as sensory play. Sensory play includes any activity that stimulates a child's senses through their experiences. Research has shown that sensory play helps build neural pathways in the brain that they will need for more complex tasks as they grow. Sensory activities can benefit a child by supporting their language development, cognitive development and problem solving skills, social interactions and emotional skills, and both the fine and gross motor skills. When we think about the senses most of us think about the five basic senses, but did you know that there are three more senses?

What are the 8 senses?

1. Sight
2. Smell
3. Hearing
4. Taste
5. Touch
6. Vestibular- head movement in space
7. Proprioception- sensations from muscles and joints
8. Interoception- sensations from internal organs (hunger, fullness, itches, need to urinate)

What are some sensory activities for infants and toddlers?

- Sensory bottles
- Puppets
- Mirror games
- Singing songs
- Texture board
- Finger painting
- Kinetic sand
- Yoga
- Move like animals
- Bubbles
- Swinging
- Balance beams
- Jumping
- Sand and water play
- Dancing
- Sliding
- Crawling
- Obstacle courses
- Climbing
- Playdough
- Drinking through a straw
- Army crawling
- Breathing activities

What are some sensory bin ideas?

- Sand
- Shredded paper
- Craft feathers
- Gardening soil
- Leaves
- Kinetic Sand
- Water (soap and water)
- Oobleck
- "Cloud" dough

Accessories to promote sensory play:

- Small plastic toys to hide and search for
- Tongs, tweezers, spoons
- Measuring cups and bowls
- Ice cube trays
- Magnify glasses
- Funnel
- Plastic cookie cutters

If you are looking for more sensory play ideas with infants and toddlers, then join my virtual workshop on February 20th!



BUILDING YOUR BOUNCE

By Lisa Rosa, Family Child Care Network
Coordinator

Child care providers can experience stress and burnout. This may lead to:

- Being less emotionally available to the children in their care
- Believing they no longer contribute to child learning and growth
- Showing lower quality interactions with children

We can take charge of our responses by learning to control our...

THOUGHTS
BEHAVIORS
ACTIONS

Building your bounce can be used to help adults build on their identified strengths, so that they are better able to cope with stress and the challenges of caring for young children.

Focusing on your four key protective factors that are important for adults to strengthen, and especially important for adults who care for children.

- Relationships: The mutual long- lasting back and forth bond we have with other people in our lives
- Internal Beliefs: The feelings and thoughts we have about ourselves and our lives and how effective we think we are at taking action in life.
- Initiative: The ability to make positive choices and decisions and act upon them
- Self –Control: The ability to experience a range of feelings and express them using appropriate words and actions

“You will either step forward into growth, or you will step back into safety.” Devereux Center. For more information, visit <https://centerforresilientchildren.org/>

CONGRATULATIONS NEW CHILD CARE PROGRAMS!

Broome Family Child Care
Valerie Antonakos

Tioga Group Family Child Care
Michaela Leyburn
Christine’s Family Daycare - Christine Rathke

Broome Group Family Child Care
Fathima’s Family Day Care LLC - Fathima Assan Farook





PLAY IT SAFE IN COLD WEATHER

By Cathy Lee, Health & Wellness Coordinator

Playing outside in the winter can be challenging. Sleds, snowmen, snowwomen, snow balls and staying warm are all part of winter. Children can play outdoors in the winter, it just takes a little more planning to be sure they stay dry and warm. It is important to watch for the Wind Chill. Winter wind draws more heat from the body than a warm summer breeze. The temperature might be 23 degrees, but it could feel like minus -4! This is not a day for outdoor play.

Dressing in layers helps keep everyone warm and dry. It is a good idea to have a wind resistant outer layer. Avoid cotton fabrics in the cold weather because cotton absorbs sweat and will feel cold. Instead, layer with fleece, wool or polyester blends. The winter wardrobe essentials include a warm hat, a neck warmer (scarves can get tangled), a wind resistant jacket, mittens or insulated gloves, thermal socks, waterproof footwear and snow pants.

Yes, it can take a lot of effort to prepare for cold weather play, but the fun is well worth it!

IT'S SNOW COLD! COLD WEATHER PLAY

Winter can be cold and dark, but we can brighten up the winter season. Here are a few ideas to encourage exploration and discovery in an outdoor, snowy classroom.

- **Cold Canvas:** Use colored ice cubes to create structures and patterns out of the ice cubes and paint with them as they melt into a white canvas of snow.
- **Winter Writing:** Draw designs onto newly fallen snow with wooden spoons, branches and pinecones.
- **Snowflake Shuffle:** Mimic the movements of a snowflake floating and dancing in the air. Guide children to use their whole bodies to communicate what they know and how they feel. What might you look like if you were a snowflake? How would you move?
- **Teaching Tools:** Get out your child-sized tools and shovels. Help children build with and shovel the snow. This type of heavy work can help ground and focus. It is also good for physical development.
- **Ice Lights:** Freeze natural items like seedpods, leaves or berries in containers of clear water. Pop out them out and string them from the tree. Observe the way birds and animals react to the creations and notice how the sun shines through them!

Children are like snowflakes, they are all different in a beautiful way. So be one with the snowflakes before they melt!



FINE MOTOR SKILLS

By Allie Drake, Training and Coaching specialist

Fine motor skills are the tiny movements we make with our hands, fingers, feet and toes. These movements allow us to do everyday tasks. We develop these skills from birth to adulthood.



Examples of fine motor skills:

- Holding a pencil and writing/drawing
- Using scissors
- Folding clothes
- Typing on a keyboard
- Tying your shoes
- Twisting a doorknob
- Using eating utensils
- Zipping a zipper

How to help children improve fine motor skills

- Putting together puzzles
- Encouraging drawing
- Cut with child safe scissors
- Use playdough
- Using tweezers
- Building with small blocks
- Fingerpaint
- Sorting activities
- Bead threading

*Be aware of choking hazards when working with younger children

Fine Motor Skill Milestones

0-6 Months: Grasping something with hands

6-12 months: Transferring one object to another hand

1-2 years: Begins self-feeding

2-3 years: Rolling and squeezing putty

3-4 years: Drawing copies of circles

4-5 years: Printing letters and numbers



Commit to a high quality program in the new year and check out [QUALITYstarsNY](https://qualitystarsny.org/).

Join an upcoming informational session to learn more about how your program can benefit from joining QUALITYstarsNY. Visit <https://qualitystarsny.org/> to learn more.

Low Enrollments? Considering closing your Child Care program?

Let Family Enrichment Network Help!

Now offering: **LOW ENROLLMENT ANALYSIS**

The Child Care Resource Center wants to help you succeed. We need licensed/registered providers, **INCLUDING YOU**, more than ever!

Analysis includes:

- Comprehensive marketing review
- SWOT analysis
- Community Engagement evaluation
- Personalized action plan



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Call us today!





FIVE WAYS PLAY CHANGES A CHILD'S BRAIN

By Cathy Lee, Health and Wellness Coordinator

Children spend a great deal of time playing and play helps build a child's brain. Play activates the front part of the brain and builds new circuits. Free Play has more impact on brain development than structured play. This is because with Free Play children have to make their own decisions, take turns, regulate emotions, and solve problem. However, all play is essential to brain development.

Here are five ways that play builds a better brain:

1. Play builds resilience. During play, children learn how to negotiate for themselves, resolve issues and share with others. The ability to make mistakes and recover is critical to success in life.

2. Play changes neurons in the brain. Sergio Pellis, a researcher at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta, Canada states, "The experience of play changes the connections of neurons at the front of your brain. Without play experiences, those neurons aren't changed."

3. Play stimulates curiosity and supports lifelong learning. During imaginative play, children try adult and make-believe roles to explore their world. This exploration helps build a better brain and creates a desire to learn.

4. Play helps children navigate complex social situations now and into adulthood. The new circuits that the brain builds from play help create social agility. Social skills are one of the greatest predictors of academic success.

5. Play develops dexterity and physical strength. When children play, they're moving and developing muscle control and strength. This promotes healthy habits that decrease the likelihood of childhood obesity and instills passion for physical activity throughout life.

If you want to learn more about this topic, watch for future programs on The Connections Between Active Play and Social Emotional Learning in Early Childhood.

SAVE THE DATE

The Children's Fair will be at SUNY Broome on Sunday, April 13, 2025 from 12pm to 4pm.

Join the family event with an activity table in the gym or an informational table in the cafeteria. More information will come out in the new year!