



CHILD DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Network News

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Emergency Child Care Scholarship Helps Families and Child Care Programs

The Emergency Child Care Scholarship is a one time scholarship provided to parents who face a financial emergency, or temporary inability to pay for the legal care of their child(ren). Parents who live or work in Tompkins County, or who are using a child care program in Tompkins County, are eligible to apply. Preference is given to single parent families, families with more than one child in care, and families working in low paying jobs, or looking for work. A committee meets once a month to consider scholarship applications. Emergency Child Care Scholarships are made possible by donations from the City of Ithaca Community Development Block Grant Program, the Park Foundation, the First Congregational Church, and private individuals.

The purpose of the Emergency Child Care Scholarship is to maintain consistency of care for children as other facets of their family life are being stressed. A secondary goal is to benefit the child care programs by helping them maintain their income as a small business. The types of child care programs who are eligible to receive the scholarship funds are child care centers, family and group family home day cares, school-aged programs, summer camps, and informal arrangements. 'Informal' can be kith and kin care as well as legally-exempt care; all are 'legal' by New York State guidelines.

The scholarship is intended to assist low and moderate-income families who are experiencing a financial emergency which may have resulted in missed child care payments and the need to pay or lose their child care space. Please encourage parents to apply as soon as the financial situation begins to be problematic, instead of waiting and then having to deal with a larger bill.

Some situations that have prompted parents to apply for the scholarship have been:

- Loss of job and/or pay cuts
- Medical emergencies that resulted in a bill
- Costly car repairs
- Non-custodial parent non-payment of child support



Miscommunication among parents, child care programs and Department of Social Services (DSS), about the requirements and deadlines that must be met for subsidies to be paid regularly. *Please keep in mind that, assuming an application is approved, DSS will only back pay to the date they received the parents' application.*

Thank-you notes from parents and child care programs that have benefited from a scholarship help to validate the need for, and successful administration of, the emergency scholarship program. A center director wrote, "...the relief provided by the Council's Scholarship Program has often been crucial to the economic well being and peace of mind of our families facing financial crisis."

New CPR/First Aid Law - Grace Period

In our last Network News, we informed everyone of the new law that had been passed requiring that **at least one employee who holds a valid certificate in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid be on the premises of a child care program during the program's operating hours.** This new law goes into effect December 11, 2010.

The state has granted a grace period for compliance with this law. There will be no violation cited through February 28, 2011 if your program is not in compliance with this new requirement. Beginning **March 1, 2011** a violation will be cited for all registered and licensed programs not in compliance with the law.

Please keep this in mind as you plan for yourself and/or staff to take this training. **We have scheduled three opportunities in January and February to take the training at the Council. See the training section. A minimum of 6 people is required to hold each class, and we will cancel a week ahead of we do not have 6, so sign up soon!**



You can also contact the American Red Cross at (607) 273-1900, Ext 14, to find out about upcoming class offerings.

Legally Exempt Child Care

Informal Care is unregulated but legal care. Informal care may be any of the following:

- A person who does child care in his/her home for a maximum of 2 children at a time in addition to his/her own children or
- A person/program providing care for any number of children for less than 3 hours a day (such as a nursery school) or
- A person who provides care in the home of the child/children or
- A person who is closely related to the children in care (includes grandparents, aunts, uncles and first cousins).

Legally-exempt child care providers do informal child care for children of families receiving the Department of Social Services Child Care Subsidy. The Department of Social Services approves the parent for subsidy, while the Child Development Council enrolls legally-exempt child care providers. Both parent and provider must be approved or enrolled in order for a provider to be paid for the care.

Legally-exempt care is very important for parents who work odd hours, or rotating shifts, because most licensed and registered providers/programs are unable to accommodate those hours.

Tompkins County currently has 207 legally-exempt providers, enrolled by the Council. Half provide care in the child's own home, and the other 50% provide care outside the child's home. They are visited by the Council to ensure the providers and homes meet basic health and safety requirements.

Legally-exempt providers who provide care in their own home are eligible to join the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), which reimburses child care programs for serving healthy meals and snacks.

For more information about legally-exempt care, contact the Council at 273-0259.

<u>Nursery School Network</u>	<u>SACC Forums</u>	<u>Center Directors' Group</u>
Third Wednesdays 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. January 19 - University Cooperative Nursery School February 16 - East Ithaca Preschool March 16 - St. Paul's Nursery School, Ithaca	Second Tuesdays 10:30 a.m. - Noon at Child Development Council January 11 February 8 March 8	Second Thursdays 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. at Child Development Council January 13 February 10 March 10

NEW CHILD CARE TIME & ATTENDANCE SYSTEM

The state is rolling out a new automated time and attendance system for processing of child care subsidy payments. The new Child Care Time and Attendance (CCTA) system will be used throughout New York State to improve the accuracy and timeliness of child care subsidy payments and to provide parents/caregivers with an easy way to check their child(ren) in/out of child care programs. The Tompkins County Department of Social Services is going to be rolling this system out in 2011.

Main Benefit

To simplify the child care time and attendance process by allowing parents and/or caregivers to quickly check children in and out of child care programs

Features of the System

- Track time and attendance of children
- Verify eligibility
- Calculate and authorize subsidized child care payments
- Improve the timeliness and accuracy of payments
- Capability of bi-monthly payments
- Allow parents and caregivers to check their children in and out of a child care program using a computer



Equipment Needed - A computer with Internet access

The Tompkins County Department of Social Services and the Child Development Council are working together to ensure access for providers to this new system. We are interested in getting all types of child care programs signed up and ready to use this system. In addition, you will be receiving a letter from the Department of Social Services regarding this system in the very near future. **If you currently have a subsidized child(ren) in your program and are interested in being involved in the initial roll out of this system, please contact Laurie at the Council at 273-0259 at your earliest convenience.**

Impact Resistant Material Required for Playgrounds

If you operate a registered or licensed child care program, be aware that playground equipment is required by NYS OCFS regulation to be installed and have impact resistant material **per the manufacturer's specifications**. If you do not have a copy of the manufacturer's specifications for your outdoor playground equipment, you can search the Internet by the model number of the equipment and follow the guidelines. If you do not know the model number - especially if you built the structure - search the Internet for a similar model and follow the guidelines. If you prefer, you may follow the recommendations for Protective Surfacing in the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Outdoor Home Playground Safety Handbook (www.cpsc.gov or 1-800-638-2772). **Please be aware that if you do not have the appropriate impact resistant materials under your playground equipment, per the manufacturer's specifications (which you should have on file), then during an inspection a violation will be cited and you will have 30 days to correct the issue.**

Goodbye Bunny Trail

After 24 years of providing childcare to the parents of South Hill and all of Ithaca, Janette McCord's Bunny Trail group family child care has closed its doors. The Council is very appreciative of Janette and all her staff members who have helped educate young children for so many years. Parents and their children and the community have all been enriched by Bunny Trail's presence. Thank you.

January is National Radon Action Month

Have you tested your home for radon?

To increase radon awareness and testing, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County will hold a free Radon Action Event on Thursday, January 20 from 2 to 4 pm at the CCE Education Center, 615 Willow Ave., Ithaca.

At this event, you will

- Hear a 20 minute presentation about radon, testing, and remediation (at 2 pm and repeated at 3 pm)
- Learn how to do a home radon test
- Get a FREE radon test kit

For more information call Carole Fisher at (607) 272-2292. No registration or reservations are necessary. Event is co-sponsored by CCE-Tompkins, NYS Dept. of Health, and Tompkins County Health Dept.

The Alternatives Free Tax Preparation Program - January 18 to April 12, 2011

Don't pay high fees to get your own refund. If you are single and earn less than \$30,000 or a family earning under \$49,000, you can get your Federal and State Income Tax Returns prepared by Alternatives Federal Credit Union VITA Program.

MAIN LOCATION — Alternatives Federal Credit Union

WHEN: January 18 - April 12, 2011

TIMES: Tuesdays: 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM, and 3:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Wednesdays & Thursdays: 3:00-8:00 PM

Saturday: 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

DRYDEN TOWN HALL - 93 E. Main St.

WHEN: January 29, February 5 & 19, March 5 & 19, April 2

TIME: 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM.

BROOKTONDALE COMMUNITY CENTER - 524 Valley Rd.

WHEN: February 7 & 21, March 7 & 21, April 4

TIMES: 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

GROTON - LOCATION AND TIMES ARE TBD



For general information, please call 216-3443.

To make an appointment, please call 2-1-1.

- **Earned Income Tax Credit** - helps provide a wage supplement for low and moderate-income families (those earning less than \$48,362 annually). This credit is worth up to **\$5,666**, and is refundable.
- **Child Tax Credit** - designed to help families offset some of the costs of raising children. This credit is worth up to **\$1,000** per child. Families who owe little or no income tax can receive some or all of this credit as a refund if they earned at least \$3,000 in 2010.
- **Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit** - designed to offset some of the child or dependent care costs that families incur in order to work. This credit is worth up to **\$2,100**, though the amount that can be claimed is limited by a family's actual federal income tax liability.
- **Making Work Pay Credit** - designed to increase families' take-home pay. This refundable credit is worth up to **\$800** for couples. Many workers received their Making Work Pay Credit as an increase in their take-home pay.

Even if you don't owe income taxes, you may still be eligible for a refund check simply by claiming these credits on your federal returns!

The Spiritual Life of Children

(This information comes from an article by Ruth A. Wilson in the September/October 2010 issue of *Exchange Magazine* available at www.ChildCareExchange.com)

A growing body of evidence indicates that children have spiritual capacities and experiences which shape their lives in powerful and enduring ways (Hart, 2005). According to Hart, these capacities and experiences include wonder, wondering, relational spirituality, and wisdom. While spirituality plays a critical role in children's lives, it may have gone unnoticed due to misguided efforts to fit spirituality into the constraints of developmental theory.

Theories about cognitive development suggest that young children do not have the intellectual capacity for meaningful reflection and thus cannot have a genuine spiritual life. A number of well-respected researchers and theorists in the field of child development and early childhood education, however, have been strong believers in a rich and significant spiritual life in young children. These believers include Frederick Froebel, Maria Montessori, and Rudolph Steiner.

Young children are natural ready to grapple with questions such as: What Am I more alive than a way to live with plants, people? These questions, nature, also relate to

Unfortunately, there are which work against the children including unbridled competition, and dismissive attitude about development of children is as many adults think of particularly spiritual or not spirituality in the holistic

Reasons for this dismissive attitude include equating spirituality with religion, thinking of human development in terms of different stages, and equating spiritual development with 'higher' mental functions, such as language and abstract thought. While most young children have limited abilities to think and talk about concepts relating to spirituality, they can (and do) have deeply spiritual experiences.

While supporting the spiritual life of children offers multiple benefits to children, it may also lead to a more peaceful society. Peace necessitates a foundation built on spiritual attitudes and values, including compassion, empathy, forgiveness, and hope. If peace education is to be effective in bringing about a more peaceful society, we may need to start at the early childhood level and make a priority of bringing attention to the spiritual life of young children.

To promote the well-being of young children and the creation of a peaceful society, adults would do well to attend to the spiritual wonderings and dispositions of young children.

References:

Hart, T. (2005). Spiritual experiences and capacities of children and youth. In E. C. Rohlkepartain, P. E. King, L. Wagener, and P. L. Benson (Eds.). *The Handbook of Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, pp. 163-178.



philosophers and are serious philosophical makes something living? tree? What is the right animals, and other while philosophical in matters of the spirit.

forces in our culture spiritual development of materialism, mechanism, individualism. A the spiritual also part of the problem, children as not being considering the role of development of children.

New CACFP Participants:

Jessie Bell
Darcy Herman-Raponi
Debra McDonald
Kindra Voorheis

New Registered FDC Providers:

Tina Robinson, Groton
Michelle Banwell, Dryden

New Licensed GFDC Providers:

The Robbins Nest (Lori Bellavigna-Robbins), Spencer
Happy To Be Me Child Care (Rachael Caskey), Newfield



Winter Fun!

Indoor Snowballs

Even when children cannot go outside because of the weather, they still need the opportunity for large motor activities every day.

Try this indoor **“Snowball Throw”**, and re-use some of the crumpled up leftover holiday tissue paper!

Form pieces of tissue paper into loose balls. Divide the balls into two piles.

Have children separate into two teams on opposite sides of a room. Set a timer for 1 minute. At go... have the children throw the “snowballs” (picking up and throwing back the snowballs thrown at them, too) across the room towards the other team as fast as they can. When the time is up, the team with the least amount of “snowballs” wins.



Free Sundays at the Sciencenter

The **Sciencenter**, at 601 First Street in Ithaca, will be offering FREE ADMISSION on the first Sunday of each month early in 2011. The dates are January 2, February 6 and March 6. Call (607) 272-0600, for more information.

Ithaca Youth Bureau's Tot Spot

The Tot Spot program is a stay and play place for children and their grownups to shake off those “cooped-up blues”. Slides, riding toys, climbers, room to zoom and more!

Who: 5 months to 5 years (and their grown-ups)

When: Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday 9:30 to 11:30am & Sunday from 3:30 to 5:30pm.
Program runs from October to late April

Where: Ithaca Youth Bureau, 1 James L. Gibbs Dr., Ithaca (near Stewart Park)

Fee: \$2 per child per visit for ages 5 months to 1 year
\$4 per child per visit for ages 1 year to 5 years
Adults are always FREE!

Frequent Visit Passes may be purchased: \$20 for 6 visits

Scholarships for Frequent Visit Passes are available if you are a Tompkins County Resident (excluding Town of Lansing residents)

For more information call the Ithaca Youth Bureau at (607) 273-8364



Squash and Orzo

A hint of maple syrup adds to the naturally sweet flavor of the squash for a meal kids will want again and again!

Lynn Fredericks, FamilyCook Productions





Ingredients

1 large winter squash
(delicata or acorn)
2 teaspoons maple syrup
¾ cup orzo pasta
1 Tablespoon butter
½ teaspoon salt
Pinch of ground black pepper

Optional Ingredients

1 cup Parmesan cheese,
grated

Directions Have kids help with the steps marked with the "little helping hand"!

1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
2. Rinse and cut the squash in half. Remove seeds.
-  3. Measure the maple syrup. Drizzle 1 teaspoon syrup over each half of squash.
4. Roast squash halves on a baking sheet, covered with aluminum foil, for about 30-35 minutes or until squash is tender and pierces easily with a fork. Remove from oven and keep loosely covered with foil.
5. Cook pasta according to package directions and drain in a colander. Place in a medium bowl. Add the butter, salt, and pepper, and stir to coat well.
6. Cut each squash half into thirds. Remove skin from squash, and serve one piece of squash over each portion of orzo.
-  7. Sprinkle Parmesan cheese, if using, over squash and orzo.

Chef's Notes

- For extra flavor, mix dried herbs — or rinsed and chopped fresh herbs — into the buttered orzo.
- Cook the entire meal the night before and refrigerate until ready to serve the next day; both orzo and squash reheat well without losing flavor or quality.
- For faster cooking, heat squash halves on a plate in microwave for 7 minutes on high, or until squash is tender and pierces easily with a fork.
- If roasting the squash in the oven, line baking sheet with aluminum foil for easier cleanup.

CACFP CREDITING FOR 3- TO 5-YEAR-OLDS

LUNCH/SUPPER — 6 servings
Must include *all* of the following
components:

Grain/Bread	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Fruit/Vegetable	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Milk	<input type="radio"/>
Meat/Meat Alternative	<input type="radio"/>

To complete the CACFP meal
requirements, I can also serve:

Cooking Matters for Child Care Providers
Julia Hastings-Black and Company
Cooking Matters (formerly Operation Frontline)
Cornell Cooperative Extension

Saturday, April 9, 2011
Dryden Methodist Church
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

This is a full day workshop for CACFP participants only. A hands-on training that includes topics such as *cooking with children, safety in the kitchen, healthy meals, creating positive attitudes and meals on a budget.*

The Training Manual and Lunch will be provided.
There is a limit of 15 for this class. 1 person per program
Register early!

There is no charge for this training.



Child Development Council
609 W. Clinton St.
Ithaca, NY 14850

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The Council will be closed:
January 17 and February 21

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Diane Feldman, Chief Financial Officer
Chris Hart, Program Assistant
Laurie Hobler, Child Care Support Services Director
Sylvia Lott, Executive Assistant
Maureen Reedy, Family Services Director
Ann Turcsik, Program/Administrative Assistant
Lynne Whetzel, CCRR Director

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Amy Bartimer, Child Care Specialist CCSS
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