



Thursday Notes from the Northeast Key
a program of CSC, Inc.



January 7, 2010

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HAPPY NEW YEAR

All of us here at the Northeast Regional Key would like to wish you all a Happy 2010!!
We hope you all had safe and relaxing holidays!

Northeast Key News

Second Friday Conference Call

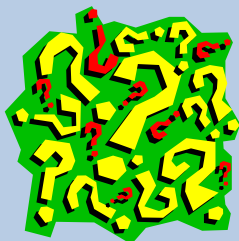


Mark your calendar for the Second Friday Conference Call in JANUARY

January 8, 2010 – 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm
February 12, 2010 – Time to be announced

If you have suggestions for a topic to discuss please feel free to email your suggestions to bgambone@cscinc.org. To register for these conference calls please send Beth an email with your RSVP in the subject line.

Conference Call Dial-In Number: (712) 432-0075
Participant Access Code: 521992



Questions on Grants!?

Do you have questions about grants?

If so, call our Northeast Regional Key Support Line

Monday thru Friday

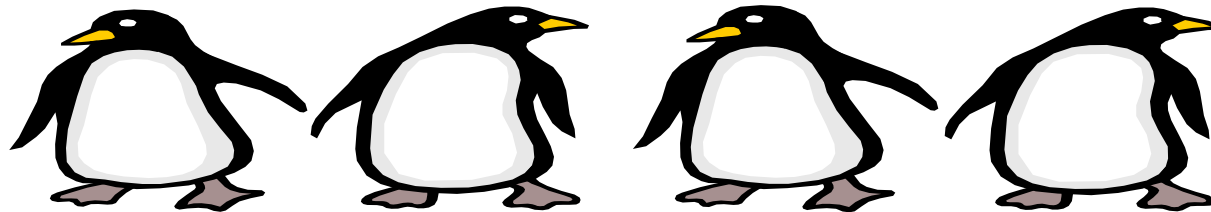
9:00 am to 11:00 am

And

1:00 pm to 3:00 pm



Diane is standing by to take your questions!



Learning Communities

Learning Communities are back!

The Learning Communities provide Directors an opportunity to meet other Directors that are using the STAR Standards to enhance the quality of their Early Learning/School Age Program. Learn from other Directors and pick up tips on how to integrate the standards into your daily practices.

Check the schedule under the Learning Communities section on the website to see when there will be one in your area. If you have a topic you would like covered in a Learning Community, please contact your STARS Manager.

Visit the Learning Community section on the website for a list of future meetings.

December 2009 Issue

** Check out the December 2009 Issue of the Simply SACC Newsletter on the CSC website under the Simply SACC Newsletter section. ***

Professional Development Activities

Attention Bucks County Practitioners!!



Are you looking for a Director Credential course in your county?

Act Now! Registration limited! There is a Director Credential Course starting January 20, 2010 at Bucks County Community College. The NE Key is funding the course, so your cost for tuition for this 3 credit course is only \$88.00!

Please register at Bucks County Community College by January 15, 2010! Register on line at www.bucks.edu, click on admissions and there will be a drop down box for admissions. The name of the course is EDUC 250 Section N82- Early Childhood Program Administration, will be held on Tuesday's 7-9:30- Founders Hall, Room 312.

If you have difficulty registering contact Barbara Boyle at Boyleb@bucks.edu

New Director Seminar

The topics will be.....

“Stress and Wellness for Child Care Practitioners”...

And

“There is Never Enough Time!”



Each activity is designed just for you and your role as a director. You will be inspired to start the New Year with a sense of wellness and organization!

Date: January 23, 2010

Time: 9:30-3:30

Location: Community Services for Children, 1520 Hanover Avenue, Allentown, PA 18109

Fee: \$15.00 - Lunch included

Registration deadline: January 11, 2010

Receive: 5 hours of professional development

Register today at www.pakeys.org calendar or contact Sheila Rapchak at srapchak@cscinc.org or at 800-528-7222 ext., 2311

****Please see the Director Seminar Jan 23 2010 flyer under the Professional Development section on the website. ****

Spanish CDA Course

You are invited to attend the first Spanish CDA course in Lehigh County! There will be an Orientation for this course on January 21, 2010 at 7:00 PM in the Fowler Building at Community Services for Children. This course is being offered for college credit by Northampton Community College (NCC) and funded by the NE Key. The Spanish CDA will consist of three consecutive classes and students will receive 9 college credits. The registration cost for each class will be only \$30.00! There is also a \$25.00 NCC application fee. Please bring a credit/check or cash to the orientation to pay the application and registration fees.

Classes will be held in the evening at Community Services for Children. Our library and computers will be available for you to support your coursework. The first class will be Thursday, January 28, 2010.

Please RSVP to Sheila Rapchak at rapchak@cscinc.org or at 610-437-6000, ext.2311-if you will be attending the Orientation. The Orientation will provide you with more details of the course, registration process for Northampton Community College and answer any of your questions.



Professional Development At A Glance

**We have attempted to pull all of the Professional Development Events on the PA Keys website that are taking place January 11, 2010 to February 14, 2010. To view this list, please see the Professional Development Section on the CSC Website or visit www.pakeys.org to see a complete listing of all upcoming Professional Development Events and to Register ** We have also heard your suggestions and have included the Knowledge Area and Competency Level for each of the events. Hope you find this format helpful.





Professional Development Status Alert for Professional Development Activities Provided by CSC/NE Key:

The winter weather has arrived. When registering for Professional Development events check with the Professional Development Organization for their cancellation practices due to inclement weather. Below is the practice followed by CSC/NE Key.

Before you head out to your next professional development activity, check the status of events sponsored by CSC/NE Key by going to the calendar at www.pakeys.org. If an activity is canceled due to inclement weather, the NE Key will update the information on the calendar (you will see CANCELED under the title of the event) and the registrants will be contacted via their email/phone information.

Make sure your contact information (email address, phone number and place of employment) is current on the website, so that the NE Key can reach you in the event of a cancellation.

If you need assistance navigating the calendar on the website, contact Sheila Rapchak at 610-437-6000, ext. 2311 or at srapchak@cscinc.org and she can walk you through it!



Winter Weather Season and Environment Rating Scale (ERS) PD

The ERS Assessors are spread throughout the Commonwealth, and as many of you know, the weather varies in all counties with each winter storm. Let's all be safe and prepared.

The Assessors use the PA Keys Website PD calendar for the most up to date communication. Please check the PA Keys Website www.pakeys.org for the status of your PD event before heading out the door.

Additionally, please update your e-mail address in your personal information on the PA Keys website. It is extremely helpful to send an e-mail directly to the participant in cases where we make changes with a PD event.

Thank You.

Professional Development Opportunities



Did you see the other Professional Development opportunities being offered in the Northeast Region?

Check out the flyers from Keystone College and Northampton Community College on the website under the Professional Development section for more information on these Professional Development opportunities.

Early Childhood Mental Health



NE Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants are available to help you with children at your site. For more information about the project or to speak with one of our consultants please call:



1-800-528-7222 or 610-437-6000

Mary Jo Mastriani, extension 2320

Berks, Bucks, and Lehigh Counties

Kelly Miller, extension 2302

Carbon, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Northampton, Pike, Schuylkill, Susquehanna, Wayne, and Wyoming Counties

January ECMH Conference Call!!

The ECMH Conference Call-In, usually held the third Wednesday of every month, is rescheduled to January 27th at the same time, 1:00pm to 2:00pm.

This month's topic will be "Collecting Clues About a Child's Challenging Behaviors"

Please feel free to join us.

The call-in number is

1-218-862-1000

(Please note the call-in number has changed)

Access Code: 157031#

(Standard Long Distance Charges Will Apply.)



**** Please see the ECMH January Conference Call flyer under the Early Childhood Mental Health section on the website****

Fostering Emotional Literacy in Young Children: Labeling Emotions

Points to Remember

- ✍ Children who have a strong foundation in emotional literacy are healthier, have more friends, are less impulsive, remain more focused, and demonstrate greater academic achievement.
- ✍ The development of feeling words is considered to be of critical importance in a child's emotional development because it makes it possible for children to better understand their emotional experiences.
- ✍ The ability to name feelings allows children to discuss and reflect with others about their personal experiences of the world.
- ✍ The larger a child's emotional vocabulary, the finer discriminations he or she can make between feelings and the better he or she can communicate with others about his or her emotions and possible problems.
- ✍ While several underlying processes contribute to a child's ability to understand and regulate his emotions, parents and caregivers can make a meaningful difference by emphasizing emotions throughout daily routines.

Things to Do

- ✍ Label your own feelings throughout the day in front of children.
- ✍ Observe children and label their feelings as they experience them.
- ✍ Talk about feelings displayed by characters in children's books, on television, or in videos.
- ✍ Allow children to feel a range of emotions, but teach them healthy ways to express them.
- ✍ Play games and sing songs involving feelings, such as "If you're happy and you know it."
- ✍ Reinforce children's efforts to express their feelings in healthy ways.

This material was developed by the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning with federal funds from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (Cooperative Agreement N. PHS 90YD0119). The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, nor does mention of trade names, commercial projects, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government. You may reproduce this material for training and information purposes.

Partners Corner

Lehigh Valley Early Learning Advocacy Network Meeting

The next Early Learning Advocacy Network meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 10, 2010, from 6:00pm-7:30pm at the United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley, 2200 Avenue A, First Floor Conference Room, Bethlehem, PA.

The meeting will provide information about how Governor Rendell's proposed budget, released the first week of February, will impact quality early education programs such as Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, Keystone STARS, Early Intervention, Nurse-Family Partnership and Head Start. The Office of Child Development and Early Learning's *Reach and County Assessment for FY 2008-2009* for both Northampton and Lehigh counties will also be handed out and explained.

Since advocacy is an important component of these meetings attendees will receive useful information that they can use to help community leaders understand the value of early childhood education. Carol Obando-Derstine, Executive Directive of the Children's Coalition of the Lehigh Valley, will be distributing materials and will also be available to answer questions about advocacy.

If you are interested in attending this meeting please contact Jan Marie Schwartz, Project Coordinator, at jmschwartz@rcn.com or 610-253-5376 by January 30, 2010. A light dinner will be provided free of charge.

The Earned Income Credit

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

What is the Earned Income Credit (EIC)?

The EIC is a tax benefit for working people who earn low to moderate incomes. It has several important purposes: to offset taxes, to supplement very low wages, and to provide a work incentive.

The EIC can offset some or all of the taxes workers must pay, such as payroll taxes, and can help cover any federal income tax workers may still owe at tax time. Besides offsetting taxes, workers earning low wages may also get cash back through the EIC refund. Workers who qualify for the EIC and claim it on their federal tax return can receive a refund check from the IRS even if their earnings were too small to owe income tax.

Who can get the EIC and how much is it worth?

Single or married people who worked full-time or part-time at some point in 2009 can qualify for the EIC, depending on their income.

- Workers who were raising one child in their home and had income of less than \$35,463 (or \$40,463 for married workers) in 2009 can get an EIC of up to \$3,043.
- Workers who were raising two children in their home and had income of less than \$40,295 (or \$45,295 for married workers) in 2009 can get an EIC of up to \$5,028.
- **NEW!** Workers who were raising three or more children in their home and had income of less than \$43,279 (or \$48,279 for married workers) in 2009 can get EIC of up to \$5,657.
- Workers who were not raising children in their home, were between ages 25 and 64 on December 31, 2009, and had income below \$13,440 (or \$18,440 for married workers) can get an EIC up to \$457.
- Workers with investment income exceeding \$3,100 in 2009 may not claim the EIC.

Note: New changes to the qualifying child rules take effect in 2009, which may affect eligibility for a small number of tax filers in the 2010 filing season. Check www.cbpp.org/eic2010 for more details.

How do you get the EIC?

- Workers raising a “qualifying child” in their home in 2009 must file either Form 1040 or 1040A and must fill out and attach Schedule EIC. Workers with children cannot get the EIC if they file Form 1040EZ or do not attach Schedule EIC. Married workers must file a joint return to get the EIC.
- Workers who were not raising a “qualifying child” in their home in 2009 can file any tax form – including the 1040EZ. These workers write the dollar amount of their credit on the Earned Income Credit line on the tax form. They do not file Schedule EIC.
- A correct name and Social Security number must be provided for each filer listed on the tax return and each child listed on the Schedule EIC. If this information is incorrect or missing, the IRS will delay the refund.

Who is a “Qualifying Child” for the EIC?

- Sons, daughters, stepchildren, grandchildren, and adopted children
- Brothers, sisters, stepbrothers, or stepsisters – as well as descendants of such relatives
- Foster children who are placed with the worker by an authorized government or private placement agency

“Qualifying children” must live with the worker for more than half of the year. They must be under age 19, or under age 24 if they are full-time students. Children of any age who have total and permanent disabilities also may be qualifying children. Valid Social Security numbers are required for qualifying children born before December 31, 2009.