Parent - Provider Partnerships

By Cammey Rocco, WA State Child Care Resource & Referral Network

Child Care providers play an instrumental role in creating partnerships with parents. Parents are an imperative part of the child care program and providers should strive to make their programs inclusive for parent involvement and input. It is important, however, to be sensitive to the interest level of involvement parents may choose. As long as you are aware of their interest level and you provide them with opportunities to get involved, you have established the desire to work toward a partnership. Parents and providers who work together will have a positive influence on the developmental outcomes of children, have a strong network of support and participation, and add to the quality of the program overall.

Involving parents in the work you do can strengthen your program and benefit the children overall. Some things you can do to get parents involved are:

Communicate regularly with parents in a variety of ways. Emails, telephone conversations, handwritten notes, and parent teacher conferences are just a few examples of communication techniques. Most importantly, one on one conversations with parents will not only keep them informed of their child’s progress but will also help keep you informed of things that may be going on in that child’s family life. Something to keep in mind when communicating with parents is to try and present everything optimistically. Doing so will send a message to your parents that you genuinely care about their child and want to partner with them in making the child’s early learning years a positive experience.

Get to know each child and his/her family as much as possible. This will help you gain a better understanding of the family’s cultural background and provide you with opportunities to support parents in their efforts to effectively raise their child. When a child first enrolls in your program, find out as much information about that child as possible. Besides the child’s name, age and birthday; ask about their siblings, favorite pets, favorite toys and activities, favorite foods, likes and dislikes allergies, fears or concerns, and medical conditions. This information will not only help you start a relationship with the child but will also act as a common ground of knowledge to build upon with the parent.

Invite parents to participate or provide input in activities and events at your center or home. Invite parents to volunteer in classrooms, read stories to the children, chaperone on field trips, talk to the children about their careers, or involve them in planning for special events. Encourage parent’s suggestions and feedback on your program. Although you might not incorporate every idea you hear, when you listen to your parents they feel like you value their advice and they become more invested in your program. In this process, you will be building more positive, open, and trusting relationships with parents.

Acknowledging parent concerns and complaints with open discussions shows respect for parents and validates their feelings. Although you may not always agree on issues there’s always a middle ground where resolutions can be acceptable to all.

Since parents are their child’s first teacher and they are responsible for ensuring their child is raised in a supportive environment, positive parent-provider relationships are important. The children benefit, your program benefits, and as individuals involved in the partnership, you and the parents benefit as well.
"Frozen Banana on a Stick Recipe"

- 1 banana
- 2 craft sticks
- 8 oz container vanilla yogurt
- ½ cup crushed graham cracker crumbs

Break the banana in half; insert a craft stick into the flat end.

Roll banana halves in yogurt, then in crumbs.

Freeze for at least 1 hour.

Makes 2 Servings.

TIP: This recipe has many variations. Instead of rolling banana in yogurt, try maple syrup, orange juice concentrate or honey. Instead of graham cracker crumbs, try coconut, peanuts or sesame seeds.

Fourth of July Noisemakers

Celebrate this all-American holiday with a patriotic craft. As you put it together, you can explain the history behind our celebration of the 4th, or talk to your child about the meanings behind the colors of our flag – for example, "For our country's first flag, Betsy Ross used red for bravery, white for freedom and blue for truth." When the noisemakers are done, your child can join the parade with a one-of-a-kind instrument!

Materials:
- Small hard items (rocks, dry beans, popcorn kernels, pennies, and so on)
- Frozen juice cans with lids
- Tape
- Red, white, and blue tissue paper
- Twist-ties

What to do:
1. Place a few hard items inside each can.
2. Tape on the lids.
3. Roll the cans in red, white, and blue tissue paper so there are several inches of tissue paper sticking out beyond each end of the cans.
4. Have your child twist the tissue paper together at each end and secure with a twist-tie.
5. Use the noisemakers in a Fourth of July parade!

Safety:
This craft is not appropriate for children under 3 years of age because the small objects suggested pose choking hazards to young children.

With the New Year comes a renewed vision and hope surrounding the possibilities for the early learning field. WA Scholarships is participating in this arena by launching our new BA scholarship program. This is a one-year pilot BA model in King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties. Three child care providers have been selected to continue their education in a four-year University, focusing in Human Development and Child and Family Studies. The recipients are Peggy Ann Butler, Mai-Thanh Dovinh and Sirena Haddock. These students represent a combination of new and returning scholars. We congratulate them and look forward to their continued success.

Our upcoming outreach efforts include participating in approaching conferences focused on education and diversity, community college visits and planning efforts for the Champions for Children celebration. It is an active time that has us all excited for the months to come. For more information on the scholarship program you can check out our website (www.childcarenet.org) or call us toll-free (1-866-308-3224).

“If you’re happy and you know it clap your hands!”
Summer Safety—Field Trips

Children, staff, everyone likes the excitement and the adventure of a field trip especially when the weather turns warm. A little advanced planning can help make your trip a successful occasion that the children will remember with pleasure. Here are some suggestions for developing:

- Call ahead or visit the park or facility if you are unfamiliar with the area or the services available (water, bathrooms, food, fees, etc.).
- Establish a safe and direct route to and from your destination.
- Maintain adult to child ratios needed to insure the safety and well being of the children. Add extra staff if safety is a special concern (crowded area, limited visibility, etc.).
- Post trip information by the telephone in the office area or other pre-established location. Include route, destination, departure and return times, a list of the children and adults involved, field trip permission slips, and a cell phone number if available.
- Carry a first aid kit, health consent forms and emergency information for each child with you. Also include “as needed” medications for children with special health needs and directions for its use for that child. Use of sunscreen requires parental permission. At least one staff member must have a current first aid and CPR certificate.
- Plan to keep food/lunches cold and safe. Make arrangements for handwashing if running water is not available.
- Plan for frequent rest and water breaks between activities.

For more information about field trip safety, sunscreen use or other health related topics please consult the public health nurse for your area at (206) 296-2770.

Personal Safety Checklist for Children

- Provide tags for each child with the name and phone number of your child care facility. If you do use individual names on the tag, use first name only.
- Make sure the adults are all familiar to each child.
- Establish a buddy system. Children with special needs may need to have an adult buddy.
- With parental permission, apply sunscreen (follow container directions) to each child as necessary.
- When you arrive at your destination, point out key landmarks and identify a “lost child” area.
- Teach each child the steps to take if they get separated from the group:
  1. Remain in the area where they last saw the group or go to the “lost child” area.
  2. If possible, ask for help in an open visible place from someone in charge (ticket taker, clerk, etc.).
  3. NEVER leave the area with an unidentified person.
  4. Reassure the children that if they do become separated from the group, you will be looking for them. Count the group out loud so the children know you will know if someone is missing.

- If you are using private cars, make sure there is a booster seat or seat belt available for each child and that the car is insured for transporting children. Each adult must have passed the Washington State background check.
- If you are walking, review safety rules (safe street crossing, staying together, etc.).
- If you are going by van or bus review those safety rules.

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Reprinted with permission from Public Health - Seattle & King County
Esta es una gran oportunidad para que las proveedoras de cuidado de niños obtengan crédito universitario, y al mismo tiempo, completen sus horas de requerimiento anual de STARS. Este curso le ofrecerá información relevante al contenido y la práctica de su trabajo. Proveedoras podrán implementar los conceptos del curso para su crecimiento y desarrollo profesional.

Los beneficios son los siguientes:
- 10 horas de STARS
- 1 crédito universitario
- El pago y las tarifas son pagadas por la beca DEL (un valor de $84.30)
- Los libros son proporcionados para el uso del estudiante (un valor de $60.00)
- Entrenamiento y apoyo individual en su trabajo en el hogar.

Relaciones entre niño, la familia y la comunidad, Módulo I

Cuando los participantes terminen el Módulo I, podrán:
- Analizar la importancia de las relaciones positivas entre adultos que trabajan en entornos de cuidado de niños o aprendizaje de edad temprana.
- Explicar el impacto de las actitudes y comportamientos individuales en entornos de cuidado de niños y aprendizaje de edad temprana.
- Explicar como las creencias, actitudes y sentimientos de familias y cuidadores afectan el desarrollo emocional de los niños pequeños.
- Describir como las políticas del lugar de trabajo y las prácticas de cuidado de niños pueden debilitar las relaciones.
- Describir los atributos y el proceso de la creación de una comunidad dedicada con los niños, cuidadores y familias en entornos de cuidado de niños y aprendizaje de edad temprana.

Español Módulo 2

Fechas: sábados 16, 23, & 39 de junio, 2007

Horas: Clase A 7:30-10:50 am Clase B 11:30 am-2:50 pm

Lugar: Green Park

Español Módulo 1

Instructora: Andrea Valencia

Fechas: sábados 14 & 28 de abril 12 & 26 de mayo, 2007

Horas: Clase A (#0913) 8:00-10:30 am Clase B (#0914) 11:00 am-1:30 pm

Lugar: Green Park

Cursos: Clase A #0913 Clase B #0914
Alianzas de padres y proveedores

Por Cammey Rocco, Washington State Child Care Resource & Referral Network

Los proveedores de cuidado del niño desempeñan una función decisiva en la formación de alianzas con los padres. Los padres son una parte imprescindible del programa de cuidado del niño y los proveedores deben esforzarse por brindar programas que permitan que los padres participen y expresen sus puntos de vista. Sin embargo, es importante mostrar sensibilidad ante el grado de interés en participar que los padres puedan escoger. Siempre que usted esté consciente de su grado de interés y les ofrezca oportunidades para participar, usted habrá planteado el deseo de formar una alianza. Los padres y proveedores que trabajan juntos ejercerán un efecto positivo en los resultados del desarrollo de los niños, tendrán una red sólida de apoyo y participación y aumentarán la calidad integral del programa.

Los padres que se involucren en la labor que usted realiza pueden fortalecer su programa y beneficiar a los niños en general. Estas son algunas cosas que usted puede hacer para lograr la participación de los padres:

Comuníquese regularmente con los padres de varias maneras. Los mensajes electrónicos, conversaciones telefónicas, notas manuscritas y charlas de padres y maestros son apenas unos ejemplos de técnicas comunicativas. Y lo que es más importante, las conversaciones individuales con los padres no solo los mantienen informados del progreso de su hijo, sino además lo mantienen a usted informado de las cosas que pueden estar ocurriendo en la vida familiar del niño. Algo que no debe olvidar al comunicarse con los padres es tratar de presentar todo con optimismo. Así enviará un mensaje a los padres de que usted verdaderamente se preocupa por su hijo y desea aliarse con ellos para convertir los primeros años de aprendizaje del niño en una experiencia positiva.

Trate de conocer a cada niño y a su familia tanto como sea posible. Así usted logrará comprender mejor las raíces culturales de la familia y tendrá oportunidades de apoyar a los padres en sus esfuerzos por criar al niño eficazmente. Cada vez que entre un niño al programa, reúna toda la información que pueda acerca de él. Además del nombre, edad y cumpleaños, pregunte sobre los hermanos, mascotas favoritas, juguetes y actividades preferidas, alimentos favoritos, cosas que le gustan y no le gustan, alergias, temores e inquietudes y afecciones de salud. Esta información no solo lo ayudará a iniciar una relación con el niño, sino que también servirá como base de conocimiento para construir una relación con los padres.

Invite a los padres a participar o expresar su opinión en actividades y sucesos en su centro o en el hogar. Invite a los padres a actuar como voluntarios en la clase, leer cuentos a los niños, hacer de chaperones en paseos escolares, hablar con los niños acerca de sus profesiones o hacerlos participes en la planificación de actividades especiales. Anime a los padres a hacer sugerencias y dar su opinión sobre el programa. Si bien es posible que usted no adopte cada idea que oiga, cuando escucha a los padres ellos sienten que usted valora sus opiniones y se involucran más en el programa. En este proceso usted forjará una relación más positiva, franca y de confianza con los padres.

Prestar atención a las inquietudes y quejas de los padres con discusiones abiertas demuestra respeto hacia ellos y valida sus sentimientos. Aunque tal vez usted no siempre esté de acuerdo con los asuntos, siempre hay un punto intermedio en el que pueden hallarse soluciones aceptables para todos.

Puesto que los padres son los primeros maestros del niño y son responsables de garantizar que el niño crezca en un ambiente fortalecedor, son importantes las relaciones positivas entre padres y proveedores. Los niños se benefician, el programa se beneficia y, como individuos comprometidos en la alianza, usted y los padres igualmente se benefician.
As a business owner, you don’t have the time or the expertise to handle all the issues that come up in running your business. So, it is recommended that you develop relationships with several professional advisors to assist you. You won’t need their services all the time but when you need them you want them to return your call and have an understanding of who you are. These advisors include your:

- Accountant
- Insurance Agent
- Banker/Business Lender
- Lawyer
- Business Consultant

It is best that you find these advisors before you need them so they have the time to understand you and your business. Here are some suggestions for finding and making the best use of your business advisors.

**How to Find Them** – The best way to locate good advisors is from other childcare providers. Ask them about their experiences. Your R&R or childcare association might also have some suggestions. Be sure to get two or three names.

**What to look for when choosing an Advisor** – When you have some names set up appointments letting them know that you want to interview them as potential advisors. Draw up a list of questions to ask covering the following topics:

- **Depth of Experience** – How many years experience do they have in this field?
- **Industry Experience** – What kinds of businesses do they work with? How many child care provider customers do they have?
- **Work Style** – How do they generally work with their clients? What information do they want from you?
- **Compatibility** – Do they seem like someone you could work with? Do they treat you as a professional?
- **Communications Skills** – Can you understand what they are saying or do they use technical jargon?
- **Fees** – How much do they charge?

**How to get the most out of the relationships** – First of all build a relationship with these people. Meet with them once or twice a year and let them know how you are doing. Give them copies of your financial statements or any articles about your industry that would help them understand your business.

When you talk with any advisor for a specific issue, have a clear idea of what you want from them. Be prepared with questions, information, and supporting documents. Be ready to provide them with all the information they request. If you withhold anything they can’t give you good advice. Most importantly, listen and be prepared to act on their advice. Discuss their recommendations so that you fully understand what they are advising.

If you build a good team of advisors you will have more time to focus on running your business and spend less time dealing with crises and problems because you know you have competent advisors to assist you.

*If you would like to speak to a loan officer at ShoreBank Enterprise Cascadia about this article or about a business loan, call (206) 447-9226. ShoreBank Enterprise Cascadia is a nonprofit community development financial institution that provides loans to child care providers and other businesses.*
2007 Inclusion Best Practices Seminars
Positive Behavior Support with Nancy Rosenberg, UW Experimental Education Unit
Longview on April 27, 2007
SeaTac on May 18, 2007

Washington Association for the Education of Young Children
Looking through the Kaleidoscope Conference
October 24-27, 2007
Yakima, WA
For more information visit: www.waeyc.org

Challenging Behavior Seminar
April 3, 2007
Hyatt Regency Bellevue
Bellevue, WA
For more information call: Kaplan Early Learning Company
1-800-334-2014

Blue Mountain Association for the Education of Young Children
How Does Your Garden Grow? Conference
April 21, 2007
Davis School
College Place, WA
For more information visit: www.wwcc.edu/parent/ccr&r and click on Upcoming Events or call 526-4210

Washington State Father’s Network Conference
October 28, 2007
South Seattle Community College
Seattle, WA
For more information call Greg Schell
(425) 747-4004 ext 4286
Or e-mail
Greg.schell@kindering.org

The Infant and Early Childhood Conference
May 2-4, 2007
Meydenbauer Center, Bellevue, WA
For more information contact:
Tracy Ulrich
360-629-8181
Or visit www.ieccwa.org

PROVIDER APPRECIATION NIGHT
MAY 3, 2007
6:00-8:00 PM
At the Walla Walla Community College Conference Center
Save the Date!
Watch for your invitation in the mail.
Holidays: The Anti-bias Way

Instructor: Kate Hockersmith
Saturday, April 14, 2007
9:00 am—2:30 pm
WWCC Parent-Child Center
Tuition: $53.14 1/2 credit, 5 STARS hours
ECE 144, Item #0916

This seminar will explore how to celebrate holidays and cultural traditions in ways that honor the children and their families. Discover ways to bring diversity into your early learning classroom through songs, games, crafts, recipes and more.

Tumbling Over the Edge: A Rant for Children’s Play

Instructor: Sandy Snook
Saturday, May 5, 2007
9:00 am—2:30 pm
WWCC Parent-Child Center
Tuition: $53.14 1/2 credit, 5 STARS hours
ECE 144, Item #1088

Reinforce the importance of learning through good old-fashioned PLAY! This seminar, based on Bev Bos’ book of the same name, will show you how to preserve the magic of childhood.

- To register by telephone, call 527-4443 between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm, Monday-Friday. A VISA or MasterCard will be required to pay tuition.
- For more information about ECE classes and the Washington Scholarship program, call 527-4237 or 527-4333 or toll-free 1-877-527-4333 or visit www.wwcc.edu/parent/ccr&r
- For information about WAEYC reimbursement scholarships for licensed child care providers, call 1-800-727-3107 x 16 or visit www.waeyc.org
This is an **exciting** opportunity for licensed child care providers to earn **college credit** and complete their **STARS requirements** at the same time. This course will offer meaningful, relevant content and practical help with implementing course concepts in the workplace, and an opportunity to further professional development.

**Benefits include:**
- 10 STARS hours
- 1 college credit
- Tuition and fees paid by DEL grant ($84.30 value)
- Text books provided for student use ($60.00 value)
- 3 hours of individualized on-site coaching

**Child, Family and Community Relationships,** Module 1 will be offered this spring and Module 2 will be offered in June. This course will support essential learning in the following areas:
- Creating community
- Building positive relationships with adults in the care setting
- Creating supportive partnerships with parents
- Promoting responsive, relationship-based care for young children

**ENGLISH MODULE 1**

Instructors: Melinda Brennan & Michelle Meyer  
Dates: Tuesdays  
April 10 & 24,  
May 1 & 8, 2007  
Times: 6:30-9:00 pm  
Place: WWCC  
Item: #0915

**MODULE 2**  
Tuesday June 12, 2007  6:30-8:30 pm  
Saturday June 16, 2007  8:00 am—12:00 noon  
Saturday June 30, 2007  8:00 am—12:00 noon

For more information please call 509-527-4237.
Your Child Care Resource and Referral Staff

- Melinda Brennan, Program Manager, 509-527-4237
- Michelle Meyer, Program Director, 509-529-5744
- Teri Barker, Referral Specialist, 509-527-4333 or toll-free 1-877-527-4333
- Tina Lopez, Child Care Consultant, 509-529-5744
- FAX: 509-527-1861
- WEB: www.wwcc.edu/parent/ccr&r

Access DSHS information on-line at:http://www.del.wa.gov/cce/

To find out more about:
- Forms and Publications
- Frequently asked questions
- New policies
- And more

Member of the:

Washington State
CHILD CARE Resource & Referral Network
Building Momentum for Children’s Success

www.childcarenet.org