

# Early Connections

A Newsletter for the Addison Early Childhood Community  
Winter 2009-10

## CELEBRATIONS IN YOUR CHILD CARE PROGRAM

In some early childhood programs, most of each month's activities are based on a traditional "American" holiday theme: Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentines Day, St. Patrick's Day, and Easter. **These activities may not be the best choice for young children — here's why: It is important to realize that some families do not celebrate or observe certain holidays. We need to respect our families' cultural, ethnic, religious, and family beliefs, customs, and traditions.**

- ◆ Imagine this: A child gets caught up in the excitement of singing Christmas carols and making Christmas crafts at school. Then he realizes Santa is not coming to his house because his family does not celebrate Christmas. This kind of disappointment can lead children to wish away their own precious family traditions and can result in a sense of worthlessness.
- ◆ The content of some holidays can be confusing and upsetting for young children. For instance, a young child might be afraid when she sees her child care provider put on a Halloween mask. Children of this age can be upset by having a familiar face change and may become worried about who will be taking care of them. Masks are not appropriate for young children.
- ◆ Some celebrations involve putting on a show for parents. Many young children worry about performing in a show (even if the show is very simple) and may misbehave. Performances can be great for older children but are often too much pressure for preschoolers.
- ◆ Young children are easily overwhelmed by the excitement and pressure of holidays. By sticking to regular routines, early childhood programs provide a safe, calm haven and offer some respite from the commercialism which has grown up around the major holidays.
- ◆ When time is spent on holiday crafts and activities, too little time is spent on other things the children might want to do.

The following suggestions will help you celebrate holidays in a way that's best for all children.

*Cont' on p. 11...*

## SUBSIDY NEWS

**Big changes coming!!!** Starting January 3, 2009, the new rate schedule will be in place. Waterbury will send out an announcement to both parents and providers sometime in December. For almost all parents there will be an increase in subsidy assistance, thus lowering co-payments. If you are an eprovider you can go online Sunday, January 3 to access these new amounts. Parents and providers will receive new certificates that week. The system will assign the base rate for each program using the new state base rate \* or the provider recorded rate – **whichever is lower**. After this rate is established (factoring in parent eligibility), the quality amount is assigned using the STAR level the program has attained and added to the family's base rate to determine subsidy. Now would be a good time to **make sure your rates are current in the BFIS system** and, if you haven't done so already, to **call Amethyst to talk about STARS**. Call our office with any questions. ~ **Jane & Doumina**

\*Registered Provider Base Rates: Infant \$114.29 (was \$104.00) Toddler \$110.00 (was \$102.96)  
Preschool \$98.98.86 (was \$89.30) School Age \$95.14 (was \$89.30)

**Addison County Child Care Services**

81 Water St., Middlebury, Vt. 05753

Phone: 802-388-4304

Fax: 802-388-3063

**Protective Services/Family Support:**

Doumina Noonan

Email: [FS-PS@mjcvt.org](mailto:FS-PS@mjcvt.org)**Resource Specialist:** Amethyst PeasleeEmail: [resource@mjcvt.org](mailto:resource@mjcvt.org)**Subsidy Specialist:** Jane ReillyEmail: [subsidy@mjcvt.org](mailto:subsidy@mjcvt.org)**Referral Specialist:** Ginny SinclairEmail: [referral@mjcvt.org](mailto:referral@mjcvt.org)**Food Program:** Susie Pidgeon388-2853 or [cacfp@mjcvt.org](mailto:cacfp@mjcvt.org)**Schoolage Programs:** Anne Gleason388-2853 - [schoolage@mjcvt.org](mailto:schoolage@mjcvt.org)**RESOURCES FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS:**

**D & M Fire & Safety Equipment** will come to your program to inspect and tag your Fire Extinguishers for \$35.00 per visit.  
**434-5005**

**Helpful Websites:**

- ◆ **Child Care Exchange:** [www.ccie.com](http://www.ccie.com)
- ◆ **Northern Lights:** <http://northernlights.vsc.edu/>
- ◆ **The Child & Family WebGuide:** [www.cfw.tufts.edu](http://www.cfw.tufts.edu)
- ◆ [www.Bornlearning.org](http://www.Bornlearning.org)
- ◆ [www.familyeducation.com](http://www.familyeducation.com)
- ◆ [www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)
- ◆ [www.commercialfreechildhood.org/](http://www.commercialfreechildhood.org/)
- ◆ [www.vtpic.com](http://www.vtpic.com)—VPIC is a statewide network of support and information for families who have a child with special needs or disabilities, and the professionals who work with them.
- ◆ **The Red Leaf Institute has information and resources for all aspects of the business of Family Child Care, including taxes and deductions:** [www.redleafinstitute.org](http://www.redleafinstitute.org)

**COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

**Children's Integrated Services (CIS):** If you have concerns about your child or a child in your care, birth—3 years old, or if you have concerns about the social emotional development of a child birth—5 years old, please contact the **CIS Team at 388-3171.**

**Your local Early Education office:** If you are concerned that your preschool age child or a child you care for has a developmental delay, contact your local **Early Education** office. They can answer questions and provide support/resources and guidance for talking with parents:

- \* **Addison Central/ Middlebury: 382-1760**
- \* **Addison Northeast: Bristol: Carol Birdsall/Cindy Kuhns: 453-3674**
- \* **Addison Northwest: Vergennes: Deb Angier: 877-2867**

**VERMONT'S CHILD PROTECTION LINE:** Call 1-800-649-5285 — 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to report suspected child abuse or neglect .

**CHILD CARE CONSUMER LINE:** To report concerns about a child care provider, call 1-800-540-7942 or go to [www.brightfutures.dcf.state.vt.us](http://www.brightfutures.dcf.state.vt.us) and click on 'Contact' in the upper right corner.

**PARENTS' STRESS LINE:** 1-800-CHILDREN (1-800-244-5373) - for more information see page 10

**DIAL 2-1-1** for free and confidential information and referrals for help with food, housing, employment, health care, counseling and more. 211 is a service of the United Way.

- ◆ **For a copy of Addison County Community Resources contact Addison County Child Care Services at: 388-4304**

## Addison County Child Care Providers Networks

**Bristol/Middlebury/Vergennes: 3rd Monday of the month - 6:30 PM @ Discovery Hill**

**December 7: All Networks Holiday Party @ Muffy's 948-2561**

**January 18: Book Group**—the Bristol/Middlebury/Vergennes will meet together January - March to discuss and implement ideas from the book **Learning Together w/ Young Children** by Deb Curtis and Margie Carter. Many curriculum books treat teaching as something you do to or for children. Curtis and Carter, best selling authors in the early learning field, believe teaching is a collaborative process in which you reexamine your own philosophy and practices while facilitating children's learning. Each chapter in this curriculum framework includes a conceptual overview followed by classroom stories and vibrant photos to illustrate the concepts. You will learn to create materials and a classroom culture reflecting your values; teach through observation, reflection, inquiry and action; and encourage children to represent their learning in multiple ways, including songs, stories, and drama. **Call ASAP** if you would like to participate **Counts as training hours.**

**February 15: Book Group** - see January description

*Provider Leaders: Ann Duclos-Collier - 453-7324 & Gerri Barrows - 453-3707*

**Orwell: 4th Monday of the month @ 6:30 PM**

**December 7: All Networks Holiday Party @ Muffy's 948-2561**

**January 25: Bookmaking** - learn how to make folded paper books that children can fill with their drawings or photos; use the book binder we have for our network; explore pre-made blank books that can be filled and used in programs; Providers will be able to make a book to hold information and handouts received at network meetings and workshops.

**Counts as training hours.**

**February 22: Photos in Your Program:** ideas for using photos in your program; make a scrapbook size page with pictures - bring photos of your family or child care children and do a family panel for hanging on the wall or a panel on a particular subject such as block play. We will use VELS to describe what the children are learning through the activity. These pages can be displayed for parents or used to create a scrapbook of what providers do in their program to share with parents or prospective customers. **Counts as training hours.**

*Provider Leader: Muffy Kashkin-Grollier - 948-2561*

**Brandon: Last Thursday of the month -6:30 PM @ the Brandon Fire Department**

**December 17: Holiday Party - call for details**

**January 28: class - call for details**

**February 25: Support and Discussion.**

*Provider Leaders: Jen Popp 483-9420 & Tracy Bruce 247 - 5427 Please RSVP*

**All Child Care Providers (Home and Center) are invited to Network meetings. The Network meetings offer time to share the challenges and joys of providing early care and education with others who truly understand. Each group is free to pursue its own definition of support. Newcomers are always welcome!**

*Sponsored by a Starting Points grant from Child Care Services Division in Waterbury.*

All classes take place at Mary Johnson Children's Center in Middlebury, unless indicated otherwise. Please pre-register by contacting Amethyst at: 388-4304 or resource@mjcvt.org

**THE EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

Thursday January 7 6:30—8:30 PM

Willow Wheelock, of WomenSafe, will discuss the impact of domestic violence on children and families, indications for identification and communication, and teacher strategies. CDA # 3, 4

**PROMOTING SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING IN INFANTS AND TODDLERS**

**Foundations of Early Learning: Infant/Toddler Modules I and II**

A Northern Lights Level II Series

Tuesdays January 12 & 19 and February 2 & 9 6—9 PM

Social and emotional development takes place within the context of relationships. January's sessions focus on strategies for building strong, nurturing relationships which create the foundation for all learning. Topics include experiencing, expressing, and regulating emotions; temperament; relationships, learning, and exploration; development within the context of families; and relationships as the cornerstone to early social emotional development in infants and toddlers.

In February we discuss and create responsive routines, environments, and strategies to support social emotional wellness in infants and toddlers. Sessions are based on the principles that 1) caregivers must be intentional about supporting social emotional / early literacy and language development; 2) the physical environment can promote or hinder social emotional/early literacy and language development; and 3) positive interactions between adults and very young children can support the early development of emotional literacy. Careful observation, strategies to build social skills, and working in partnership with families to support social emotional development and early communication will be addressed.

\* **Each session builds on the one before so please arrange to attend all 4 sessions.**

Participants will receive books and materials to support implementing strategies in their programs. CDA # 3 Advanced Specialized Care Cindy Kuhn-ANESU EE/FITP, Amethyst Peaslee

**PROMOTING SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING IN PRESCHOOLERS**

**Foundations of Early Learning: Preschoolers Modules 1 and II**

A Northern Lights Level II Series

4 Tuesdays March 2nd—23rd 6—9 PM

Sessions one and two of this series focus on the importance of building relationships between children, families, and colleagues, and the ways in which supportive environments contribute to children's social emotional development and competence. Participants will be able to identify strategies that can be used to (1) build positive relationships with children, families, and colleagues; (2) design environments, schedules, and routines; (3) structure transitions; (4) help children learn rules and routines; and (5) plan activities that promote engagement. Participants will be able to describe how challenging behavior serves a function for children. In the second half of the series, specific strategies for teaching friendship skills, emotional literacy, understanding the feelings of others, problem-solving, and controlling anger and calming down are discussed and demonstrated. Materials and resources to use with children are shared. Children's literature is presented as a resource for teaching social emotional skills.

\* **Each session builds on the one before so please arrange to attend all 4 sessions.**

Participants will receive books and materials to support implementing strategies in their programs. CDA # 3 Advanced Specialized Care

**WHAT DO BUTTERFLIES EAT? INTEREST-BASED LEARNING**  
**Northern Lights Level II: Physical and Intellectual Development**

This 16 hour module is designed so participants will acquire the knowledge and skills needed for them to:

- ◆ create learning experiences which support children's development and are in alignment with the Vermont Early Learning Standards.
- ◆ use a variety of developmentally appropriate teaching strategies (e.g. play-based, inquiry, teacher-directed, child- initiated) to promote individual growth and development
- ◆ establish successful strategies for communicating and collaborating with families.

This class is being offered in a **hybrid format**. There will be 3 face to face, hands-on meetings (totaling 12 hours) with the remaining hours being covered by online discussion. You will be required to do weekly observations and reflections and participate in an online small group discussion between classes. (Note: Dial up connections will not work. If you are unable to participate online, accommodations can be made. Please contact Amethyst.) The goal is to support you in putting ideas learned in class into practice in your program.

**On-site support and coaching is available as well. CDA # 2, 7, 8; CEU's (Continuing Education Units) may be available; speak with Amethyst**

**Participants will receive materials to support putting theory into practice.**

**January 16: What Do Butterflies Eat? -** This class will introduce ways to support children's learning and development by first identifying their questions and interests and then creating curriculum which holds meaning for them. We will address sensory learning opportunities, engaging classroom environments, open-ended materials, parent and community involvement, and learning goals in the eight developmental domains identified in Vermont's Early Learning Standards. **Bring some observations of children in your program that indicate what they are thinking about.**

**Laurie Shelton**, an Early Childhood Educational Consultant and Family Child Care Provider, taught at UVM's Campus Children's Center and was a founder and co-director/teacher at Spring Hill School in Waitsfield.

**February 13: Shake, Rattle and Roll -** We will explore the ways music, movement and the dramatic re-enactment of stories can support and deepen interest-based learning and VELs. We'll dance and sing and act out stories- reminding ourselves we must be relaxed, joyful models for our children and their parents. We'll discuss how music can be integrated throughout the schedule and the environment using the observations of your children, we'll brainstorm the many ways music can enhance these wonderings.

**Laura Brines**, Early Childhood Educational Consultant and Music Together Teacher, is a Never Too Early/Early Birds and Bookworms presenter, and lecturer with the UVM Early Childhood program. She is co-founder and former co-director/teacher of Spring Hill School in Waitsfield.

**March 13: Digging Deep:** Experiences outdoors intrinsically nurture a child's physical, cognitive and emotional development. Enhance your outdoor spaces, play experiences and knowledge of the natural world and create a healthier space for children and adults!

**Heather Duhamel** is currently the associate director of the Burlington Children's Space. She is a graduate of UVM's Early Childhood Program and previously taught at Campus Children's Center.

**Your STARS – Understanding the Revised STARS Standards**

**Thursday February 18 6:30 - 8:30 PM**

Whether you are currently participating in the STARS program or not, this workshop will help you understand the newly revised STARS standards. If you are in the process of applying, you may still apply under the old standards, but may want to know about the coming changes. **Deb Curtis, CDA # 5**

- ◆ *You can also contact Amethyst for one-on-one assistance with your STARS application:  
388-4304 or resource@mjcvt.org*

**NEVER TOO EARLY/EARLY BIRDS AND BOOKWORMS**

**Thursdays April 1—8 6:30—8:30 PM**

This two-part training offers an introduction to reading and sharing books and conversation with children. Take a journey into the world of children’s literature: in this lively, interactive workshop, learn the importance and joy of sharing picture books and stories with even the youngest children. Through hands-on exploration of children’s books, receive an introduction to early literacy and related developmental issues. Learn ways to create a literacy-rich environment, and have an opportunity to share practical ideas with others. Discover ways for making books come alive through animated readings, rhymes, and extension activities that encourage language development and communication. Take home ideas you can put to use immediately in your program, along with a free set of gift books.

**Sue Rakowski CDA # 2, 4, 8**

**ADVANCED NEVER TOO EARLY/EARLY BIRDS & BOOKWORMS**

**Thursdays April 22 & 29 6:30— 8:30 PM**

This early literacy training is open to providers who have previously completed a two-part Never Too Early/Early Birds and Bookworms series; priority is given to participants from prior program years. It offers an opportunity to deepen knowledge of early literacy gained from previous trainings as well as from experience. In 2009-10, the Advanced NTE training **will focus on socio-emotional development: building on the NTE foundation, providers will learn how to use children’s literature to nurture empathy, compassion, cooperative play, and effective communication – emotional literacy – as they nurture early literacy. Participants will receive a “Peaceable Stories” resource manual** (developed by the Maine Humanities Council) and gift books for their program.

**Sue Rakowski CDA # 2,3,4, 8**

**BASIC SPECIALIZED CARE**

**Thursdays March 4 & 18 6—9 PM**

This class offers all early care and education providers important information for understanding the needs of children experiencing high degrees of stress. In today’s world, this could be most children, not just those under Protective Services Care or Family Support. You will gain an understanding of Social Services and your role as a mandated reporter, review normal growth and development, and focus on the effects of abuse and/or neglect, red flags and the intergenerational nature of abuse. Working with children with special needs is touched upon. This class is required for all programs wishing to attain the “Basic Specialized Child Care Provider” status.

**Doumina Noonan, PS/FS Specialist; Brenda Gooley, District Director, Department. of Children & Families CDA # 3, 4, 6, 8**

### SPRING PARENTING SERIES

The Spring series is open to both parents and child care providers.

#### SUPPORTING CHILDREN THROUGH SEPARATION, DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

Tuesday April 6

6:30—8:30 PM

This workshop focuses on children's needs and teaches parenting skills to support parents in lessening the impact of changes on their children. **Topics include:**

- How families experience divorce and other family transitions.
- Typical reactions of children.
- Development needs of children.
- Skills that help children cope.
- Pitfalls to avoid.

Larry Shelton, UVM Human Development and Family Studies Program

#### SUPPORTING CHILDREN THROUGH LOSS AND GRIEF

Tuesday April 20

6:30—8:30 PM

This workshop will focus on behaviors you might observe in children experiencing loss from the death of a loved one - such as a family member or a pet and ways to support children in these situations. **Patty Dunne & David White, Addison County Hospice**

#### PARENTING WITH RESPECT AND PEACEFULNESS

Tuesdays April 27 and May 4

6:30—8:30 PM

"Many people enter parenthood with unresolved childhood feelings that bias their relationships with their children. As parents resolve their childhood issues, they then give to their children the greatest gift of all—loving themselves. Louise's book, Parenting with Respect and Peacefulness, teaches parents to change, not repeat, their history. It is a practical, common-sense guide to daily challenges that empowers parents to create an atmosphere for children to feel loved and secure. Filled with gentle support and valued insights, this helpful resource offers encouragement, wisdom, and hope on every page. **Louise Dietzel, M.S., author of Parenting with Respect and Peacefulness**. *Participants may buy a copy of the book at the reduced rate of \$5.00 per book. We encourage you to read at least some of the book prior to the workshops. Contact Amethyst or Ginny @ 388-4304.*

- ◆ **News from the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood:** Recent research shows that screen time is not educational for babies. Now parents who purchased Baby Einstein DVDs, mistakenly believing the videos would make their babies smarter, can recoup their money. For a form to request a refund [http://babyeinstein.com/parentsguide/satisfaction/upgrade\\_us.html](http://babyeinstein.com/parentsguide/satisfaction/upgrade_us.html) A receipt is NOT needed!
- ◆ Download free: **The Commercial Free Holiday Guide**: [www.commercialfreechildhood.org](http://www.commercialfreechildhood.org)
- ◆ **Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment**: [www.truceteachers.org](http://www.truceteachers.org)  
Download free copies:
  - **Infant/Toddler Toys, & Media Guide**.
  - **Toys, Play & Young Children Action Guide**
- ◆ [www.toysafety.org](http://www.toysafety.org)

**THE VERMONT CHILD CARE INDUSTRY AND CAREERS COUNCIL  
PRESENTS FOUR TUITION-FREE COLLEGE COURSES!  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF VERMONT (CCV)  
CLASSES START THE WEEK OF JANUARY 25, 2010**

**INFANT AND TODDLER DEVELOPMENT AND CARE**

*(Vermont State Colleges' Course # PSY 2020)*

**Thursdays 6:15-9:15 January 28-May 6, 2010 in Burlington**

This course explores processes of human development from conception through 36 months of age. Emphasis is on the physical, emotional, social, language and intellectual growth of infants and toddlers. Topics include: developmental theories and research, assessment tools, inclusion, and design of curriculum for infants and toddlers. This course is specifically designed for the early childhood setting, so students will have many opportunities to learn skills that can be applied directly to the workplace with young children. **Weekly observations of this age group are required.** Great for first time students as well as those with previous experience.

**DEVELOPMENT OF THE YOUNG CHILD: AGES 3-8**

*(Vermont State Colleges' Course # PSY 2025)*

**Mondays 6-9pm January 25-May 3, 2010 in Rutland**

This course explores processes of human development from 3 to 8 years-of-age. Emphasis is on the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth of the child. Topics include: developmental theories and research, assessment tools, design of and inclusive integrated curriculum, and the concept of transition. **Weekly observations of this age group are required.**

**PROGRAM MANAGEMENT FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

*(Vermont State Colleges' Course # EDU-2042)*

**January 26-May 4, 2010**

The course is designed to provide an overview of the role and responsibilities of the early childhood program administrator. Topics will include: philosophy and design, personnel and resource management, and legal and financial considerations. Students will develop skills and identify resources to better prepare themselves for meeting the challenges faced by early childhood administrators. **This is an advanced level class. Previous college experience is recommended, but not required. Students who have not taken an on line class MUST take the free workshop offered at CCV prior to class starting** Offered as a hybrid out of BURLINGTON Class will meet face to face from 6:15-9:15 the following Tuesdays Jan 26, Feb 16, March 16, April 13 and May 4-- The remainder of coursework will be provided on line  
**Instructor: Melissa Riegel-Garrett**

*Space is available to the child care community on a first come-first serve basis, for a \$50 application fee. Tuition is supported through grant funding received through the VT Child Development Division and the Northern Lights Career Development Center to support the early childhood and afterschool community, supporting those who work with Vermont children.*

**DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS IS JANUARY 13, 2010**

## BA COHORT INFORMATIONAL MEETING

Thursday December 10th 6 - 8 PM  
At Mary Johnson Children's Center

- ◆ Meet with representatives from Springfield College to learn how to apply for admission to the program.
- ◆ Meet with a financial aid representative and apply for assistance.
- ◆ Please bring with you:
  - ◇ An official copy of your transcripts
  - ◇ A copy of your 2008 tax return
  - ◇ A copy of your high school diploma
  - ◇ A copy of an updated resume

Our goal is to register you with Springfield College, sign up for online classes that are in alignment with your current education, and complete a financial aid application.

*Snacks will be provided.*

### COURSES OFFERED BY THE VT HIGHER EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE:

#### INTRODUCTION TO EARLY INTERVENTION

1/23, 2/13, 3/6, 3/27, 5/1

Instructor: Kate Rogers      Location: Waterbury

Contact: [allison.keating@state.vt.us](mailto:allison.keating@state.vt.us)

#### INVESTIGATIONS IN PREK-GRADE 3 SCIENCE & SOCIAL STUDIES

Dates/Times: TBA

Instructor: Pat Fitzsimmons      Location: Waterbury

Contact: [allison.keating@state.vt.us](mailto:allison.keating@state.vt.us)

MORE COURSES AND DETAILS AVAILABLE SOON AT: [www.vthec.org](http://www.vthec.org)

VT-HEC offers several programs including :

- ◆ **Early Childhood Education & Special Education Program** - a multi-tiered set of programs leading to early childhood endorsement and educator licensure which includes the option to continue beyond licensure to obtain a master's degree.
- ◆ **Autism Program**
- ◆ **Behavior Specialist Program**
- ◆ **Health Education Program**

*For general info contact Liz at: [liz.cummingham@vthec.org](mailto:liz.cummingham@vthec.org) or 1-802-498-3350*

Thinking about taking Community College courses? *Do you need to brush up on writing, math or computer skills? Would you like help preparing for the CCV Accuplacer?* Vermont Adult Learning offers FREE classes and tutorials to help you feel confident in taking college level courses. *Call 388-4392 for a schedule or to sign up for one on one tutoring.*

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

**LIBRARY STORY TIMES**--check w/ your library for days & times of story hours & special events.

### **RECREATION**

- Bristol for information 453-5885 or visit [www.bristolrec.org](http://www.bristolrec.org)
- Middlebury for information 388-8104 or 388-4041
- Vergennes contact Tara Brooks @877-1159 T&W, 8 am -12 pm or visit **recreation@vergenes.org**

**PLAYGROUPS**---The Addison County Parent/Child Center will be sponsoring **free** play-groups for children birth to 6 and accompanying adult. The Play Group calendar follows the school calendar and snow day closings. For info call 388-3171

### **Bristol**

Tuesdays 9:30-11:00  
Baptist Church

### **Middlebury**

Tuesdays 9:30-11:00  
St. Stephen's Church

### **Vergennes**

Wednesdays 9:30-11:00  
Congregational Church

**Autism Support Daily** is a parent-led support group open to parents, families and friends of those on the spectrum. New members are always welcome. For info 802-660-7240 or **lynnmgeorge@adelphia.net** or **www.autismsupportdaily.com**

**Vergennes Area Rescue Squad** has 3 technicians for fitting car seats---Beth Bannister, Chuck Welch and Becca Webb. They are holding "fitting station" hours on the first Thursday of each month from 3:00-6:00 pm and on the third Saturday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Phone 877-3683

**The Parents' Stress Line** is available in Vermont to parents, professionals, and community members for parenting support, resources and referrals. **The Stress Line is open Monday - Friday from 9AM - 5PM.** The phone number is **1-800-CHILDREN (1-800-244-5373)**

**What types of issues do people call about?** People call for a variety of different reasons. Some are having a particularly difficult day with a child and just need a listening ear, for some it's an ongoing problem and they are wondering where to turn next for more professional assistance. Often, calls have come because of the many stresses of being a single parent or difficulties dealing with a former partner. Sometimes people call because they want to find out where the nearest parent education programs are located. Or they call because they don't want to abuse their children anymore and are looking for help.

**Is this a counseling service?** The support team is available to provide a listening ear, resources and referrals, but they are not trained counselors.

**For more information, please call 1-800-CHILDREN (1-800-244-5373) or 1-802-229-5724.**

Many of these holidays are based in the Christian tradition, and in the United States, many people do not follow these traditions. Recent information from the 2000 census shows more families from cultures that have valuable traditions and customs different from traditional “American” ones.

### **Christmas:**

**Child’s-eye View:** Children who do not celebrate Christmas may feel sad and even worthless when Santa does not come to their house. Holiday stress may be hard on children and their families. And instead of encouraging children to be generous, this holiday sometimes brings out greed. Young children may also be afraid of approaching a dressed-up Santa.

**Family View:** Christmas is a Christian holiday for some families. Families who don’t celebrate Christmas feel distanced from child care programs that do. Some parents who don’t observe Christmas may be reminded of childhood memories of feeling sad and angry about being “different.” Many struggle to answer their child’s questions about why Santa doesn’t come to their house.

### **Suggested Ideas which have a deeper learning potential for children:**

- ◆ Keep the intense holiday stress out of your child care program by sticking to your regular routine.
- ◆ Explore winter themes, giving and sharing, friendship, families.
- ◆ Celebrate snow!
- ◆ Explore the concepts of dark and light... shadows. Discuss the many ways darkness is wonderful... for example, we can’t see the stars if the sky is not dark. Explore these ideas with open-ended materials and **make sure children aren’t asked to follow an adult model.** Avoid using coloring pages or line drawings that children decorate. Premade pictures give children the message their own drawings aren’t good enough and do not support their development.
- ◆ Respond to the children’s ideas and requests. Support a child who wants to write a letter to Santa or sing “Jingle Bells” at circle time.
- ◆ Keep in mind that many people (staff included) do not have lots of money for gift giving. Encourage staff who choose to give gifts to the children to do so at another time of year, such as the end of the year.
- ◆ If a parent group wants to give gifts to staff, encourage them to give a gift to the center, such as a special toy or book. If individual children or families give to staff, send a thank-you note. If staff members want to exchange gifts, they should do it when they are not caring for the children.
- ◆ Suggest a community service project as an alternative to gift giving.
- ◆ Avoid holiday theme decorations, materials, wrapping paper, etc.
- ◆ Avoid visits from Santa Claus.
- ◆ If trees or other holiday items are donated to the program, donate them to families in need..

Adapted from <http://www.betterkidcare.psu.edu>

### **Other resources:**

- ◆ **The AntiBias Curriculum Book by Louise Dermon-Sparks**
- ◆ **Roots and Wings: Affirming Culture in Early Childhood Programs by Stacey York**
- ◆ **www.newdream.org has free downloads of:**
  - **Tips for Parenting in a Commercial Culture**
  - **Simplify the Holidays**
  - **Good Times Made Simple: The Lost Art of Fun**



**INFANT/CHILD/ADULT CPR AND FIRST AID**

**Saturdays: January 9 March 27 May 1**

One Hour Recertification:	8:30 - 10 AM	\$20.00
First Aid:	10:00 - 12:30	\$20.00
Lunch Break:	12:30 - 1:00	
CPR Certification:	1:00 - 3:00 PM	\$25.00 (does not include First Aid)

- **If you take a CPR course and the First Aid course together, the cost is \$30.00.**
- **Registration forms need to be received a week before the class is scheduled; send to:  
MJCC, 81 Water St. Middlebury, VT 05753 Attn: Amethyst**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **PHONE #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE OF TRAINING:** \_\_\_\_\_ **PLEASE CHECK TRAINING NEEDED:**

**ONE HOUR RE-CERTIFICATION**\_\_\_ **FIRST AID:**\_\_\_ **CERTIFICATION:**\_\_\_

***REMINDER - both CPR and First Aid are valid for two years now.***

*Funding for this newsletter is provided by the Child Development Division of the Department of Children and Families, Addison County Child Care Services & the Addison County Early Childhood Council*

*The Addison County Child Care Directors Video/Discussion Series:*

**WHEN A CHILD PRETENDS**

**Wednesday February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010      7 – 9 PM  
Ilsley Library Community Room**

**When a Child Pretends: Understanding Pretend Play** represents the view that pretend play is not an "add-on" but an essential arena for the child's intellectual, social, emotional and imaginative development. The learning that takes place during play is seen in the child's increasing ability to think hypothetically, to reason and to function effectively as a social being in a complex world and leads to advanced intellectual functioning. Increasing pressures to begin formal academic work in the preschool years and misunderstanding of the nature of play have coalesced to diminish the time and attention given to creative play in the classroom and at home—a situation decried by eminent child development professionals.



**FROM PICTURES TO WORDS**

**Wednesday March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010      7-9 PM  
Ilsley Library Community Room**



**From Pictures to Words: Understanding the Foundations of Literacy Learning** explores children's entrance to the world of literacy. How do children come to literacy? Based on recent research in psychology and education, *From Pictures to Words* represents the view that encouraging young children to make pictures, to invent their own graphic representations, sets the literacy process in motion. As children gain experience with written language by being read to, dictating their stories and having opportunity to experiment with crayons, markers and pencils, they begin to realize that these marks, alone or in combination, stand for the sounds of language. Later, the child is able to see lines of print as patterns of words that comprise sentences in a story. If the child is engaged in interesting, enjoyable activities, the accompanying instruction becomes helpful guidance that encourages the search for meaning in and through print.

*Both videos are part of The Learning Child Series, developed to assist parents and educators in engaging children to become motivated and thoughtful lifelong learners. The documentaries represent the view that intellectual, social, and imaginative growth, as well as specific skills such as literacy, develop optimally in the context of activities that are inherently meaningful to the child. For more information about the videos: [www.learningchild.org](http://www.learningchild.org)*

*Sponsored by the Addison County Child Care Directors Network  
and Addison County Child Care Services.*

**FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

*For more information and to RSVP contact Amethyst  
at 388-4304 or [resource@mjcvt.org](mailto:resource@mjcvt.org)*

## COOKING WITH CHILDREN

Making food together is an experience which incorporates many areas of learning—literacy, social studies, creative expression and science. “Scientific knowledge and thinking are involved as children use their senses, along with tools like measuring spoons, egg beaters and spatulas, make observations, gather and record information and predict what might happen. “(from Guiding Your Child’s Learning: A Parent’s Guide to the VT Early Learning Standards) You can ask children to guess what will happen when they mix the wet and dry ingredients together. How do the ingredients feel when they are dry? Compare the feel of the flour to the salt and baking soda. How do they feel different? How does it feel when the wet ingredients are added to the dry? Invite them to describe the smell and the taste. Later, perhaps at lunch or before rest, help children recall the experience and write down their words to share with families.

Jan Brett’s book, Gingerbread Friends is a delightful introduction to making gingerbread people and a great way to extend the literacy connections with cooking. Expand on the experience by inviting children to write their own stories and to design their own gingerbread creations. At Mary Johnson Children’s Center, the children have been making all sorts of gingerbread constructions - from gingerbread beaver and fairy houses to gingerbread backhoes and trains!

*Write the recipe using pictures as well as words to support the children to ‘read’ it.*

### **Mix dry ingredients:**

- 3 cups flour
- ◆ 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon salt
- ◆ 2 teaspoon ginger
- ◆ 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- ◆ 1/4 teaspoon cloves



### **Cream:**

- ◆ 3/4 cups butter
- ◆ 1/2 cup molasses
- ◆ 3/4 cup brown sugar
  
- ◆ Add egg to butter/sugar mix.

**Mix dry and wet ingredients together.**

**Roll out on a lightly floored surface to a 1/4 inch thickness and cut into desired shapes.**

**For gingerbread cookies, bake at 350 for 7 - 8 minutes or until golden brown.**

**For gingerbread constructions, cook time depends on the thickness - for a 1/4 inch slab bake at 275 degrees for about 1 & 3/4 hour.**

- **You can stick your gingerbread pieces together with ‘icing cement’ - mix together:**

- 2 cups confectioners sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar
- Enough milk or water to make a paste that can be squeezed through a pastry bag—you can make a pastry bag by cutting a corner of a plastic bag.
- Some recipes call for egg whites, but since children are going to want to taste the icing, it is better to avoid the use of raw eggs.

- **Decorating Techniques:** Sometimes it is better to decorate elaborate pieces flat, then assemble the pieces.

- **Painting:** Put a little icing into a small container or bowl and add just the smallest amount of water. You can also just wet the paintbrush and then stir the ‘paint’ with it and that is enough water. You then paint the gingerbread pieces. The result when the icing dries is a smooth coating with no visible brush lines.

