



# Better Kid Care

## Hello Newsletter Subscribers!

Welcome to this month's issue of the **Better Kid Care E-Newsletter** - *A newsletter for those caring for children.*

**Notable Quote:** "Good intentions are at least, the seed of good actions; and every one ought to sow them, and leave it to the soil and the seasons whether He or any other gather they fruit." ~ *William Temple, Sr.*

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## Tips for Early Educators and Practitioners

### Summer Memories

"I take time in August to write personalized welcome postcards to the new children coming to my program in September. I make them myself and use a simple art idea to decorate with, such as a leaf print. On the back I welcome the children and families to the program, share information to look forward to, as well as something special about myself. I keep the postcard simple and send a more detailed letter later. If the children were in my summer program, I make them feel special by recalling something we did together over the summer and add ideas to look forward to. This seems to get us off to a positive start in September." - *Home provider from Pittsburgh, PA*

Where do you find the best ideas on caring for children? From early educators and practitioners, of course! Do you have a **great tip** or **good thing**? Send us your best tips in writing and your tip may end up in our newsletter! Email Christine at [crb16@psu.edu](mailto:crb16@psu.edu) or contact the Better Kid Care Program at 814-865-7894 or 800-452-9108 (within PA).

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## Feature Article



### Intentional Early Educators: Tell Me More

by Christine Belinda

"The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) held its 16th National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development Conference, titled Intentionality in Early Childhood Education." The conference brochure described intentionality as "being playful and deliberate. Knowing what you're doing and why, and being able to explain it to others; having a vision--as educators, as administrators, as a profession."

### Everyday intentions

As an early educator and practitioner, your everyday outlook includes intentionality. To begin with, you have intentionally chosen to go into the field of early education. Your day with young children includes plans that you have deliberately made. The materials, projects, experiences, environments, and activities all were chosen with your intentions in mind. Stop and think – does every action you make have an intention?

### Intentionality: Tell me more

Being intentional is most likely **not** something new to you. What may be new is how early educators are consciously taking a closer look at what intentionality means and why it is important.

The profession of early education has slowly been building an awareness of the importance of early education in communities around the world. In order for the field of early education to be recognized, respected, and revered as a profession, intentionality must be present. When intentions are clearly stated and woven into the early childhood program, those looking at it see its importance.

### What does being intentional mean to you?

Take time to answer the following questions:

- What are some of your personal intentions in life?
- Where did these ideas come from?
- Why are these intentions important to you?
- How do you make your intentions become realities?
- How do you clearly explain your intentions with others?



Unfolding your ideas about your intentions can be overwhelming! After all, even your intentions can have intentions. This means you may have carefully planned intentions, but somewhere in the process, changes may occur and a new intention is revealed. Some might call this unintentional intention!

## Balanced intentions

What happens when you are not “planful” and deliberate; when you are unintentional? Many good things happen when plans are well thought out, but equally positive results occur from situations and experiences that are unintentional. Sometimes slowing down and letting life just “happen” is equally as important as planning meaningful experiences. Working with young children takes thought in being both intentional and being unintentional.



## Planning for intentionality in early education

One way to be intentional in early education is to be aware of current and well documented research affecting early education and care, such as child development and developmentally appropriate practices. Knowledge in all aspects of early education gives you background and support for directing, defining, and stating your intentions.

## Planning for intentionality




- **Know your vision** - What are your goals for the children, the group, and yourself? How do you want to achieve these? When you are clear about your mission, you have a strong base to build from and return to for direction.
- **Know your intentions well** - Ask yourself “why”: Why did I do that? Why am I using this? Why should this be expected of this child? Each choice you make in your work with children needs an explanation that is based on knowledge of the child and of child development.
- **Share your intentions** - Make others in the program (families, staff, children, etc.) aware of your intentions, plans, and reflections. Newsletters, handbooks, parent meetings, and parent bulletin boards are a nice way to explain in writing your ideas, plans, and reflections.

## The reflection

What you do each day as an early childhood practitioner is extremely important, not only to the field of early education, families, and to children, but also to humanity. Take time to look closely at your intentions—how they are planned, incorporated, and received. Reflecting on your intentions requires you to be clear about your actions, thoughtful in your work, and brings new information to consider. It is these intentional efforts and plans that reflect who you are as an early educator and practitioner.

## Distance Education Highlights

### **New! The Art of Observation Lessons!**

Introducing **five** new one-hour, web-based, distance education lessons on The Art of Observation! Look for new QuickTime Video Clips  throughout the lessons.

Preview the new *one-hour* lessons by selecting from the following titles:

[Observation: A Toolkit of Methods](#) 

[Observation: Connecting to Children](#) 

[Observation: Connecting to Families](#) 

[Observation: It Starts with You!](#)

[Observation: Preparing to Observe](#) 

To view a complete listing of all Distance Education Lessons and additional information and resources, visit the [Better Kid Care Distance Education](#) page.

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## Health and Safety Tips

### **Learn the Signs: Act Early**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have launched a public awareness campaign, "[Learn the Signs: Act Early](#)." The campaign aims to help child care providers and health care professionals educate parents about child development. All materials are free and available online in both English and Spanish.

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## Turn the Page

### Great Books to Read with Children

Enjoy the following stories about *Dog Days of Summer!*



*Carl Goes to Daycare*, by Alexander Day, published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux (BYR), ISBN 0374310939. Carl the lovable dog accompanies his young owner on a visit to a daycare center.

*Pretzel*, by H. A. Rey, published by Houghton Mifflin, ISBN 0395837332. Pretzel finds that being the longest dachshund in the world is special...and challenging.

*Harry the Dirty Dog*, by Gene Zion, published by Red Fox Books, ISBN 0099726017. Harry is a white dog with black spots who likes everything, except getting a bath!

*The Sailor Dog*, by Margaret Wise Brown, published by Golden Books, ISBN 0307001431. Scuppers the Dog wants to be a sailor.

*Move Over, Rover*, by Karen Beaumont, published by Harcourt Children's Books, ISBN 0152019790.

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## For Your Families: Family Time / Work Time

Are you looking for articles to share with your families? Do you need information for your parent/family bulletin board? [Family Time / Work Time](#) shares easy-to-read articles for busy parents and caretakers with a focus on *Building Strong Families*. You are welcome to print and share these publications with your friends, family, and other child care providers

### What about Siblings? by Nancy Wilson

In families brothers and sisters have some great times together. Other times they may argue and fight. This happens in families and is normal. A parent's job is to teach their children ways to resolve conflicts in a positive way. Some tips and facts for parents:

Your goal as a parent is to be fair. Be aware that it is not always possible for things to be equal. Don't compare one of your kids to the other. Don't take sides.

Make sure each one of your children feels wanted, loved, and important. Children who are unsure of a parent's love tend to become jealous easily.

*To read more about family fitness and view the entire Family Time/Work Time article, click on the picture icon.*



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## Better Kid Care Satellite Season 2007-08:

### They're here! Satellite Dates and Topics!

Welcome to the 2007-08 satellite season! Satellite workshops offer opportunities for child care providers to learn from experts and to share their experiences with other child care providers nationwide. Professional development hours are available. Mark your calendars now with the following dates and topics:

#### October 11, 2007

##### Problem Solving with Children

Professional Development Code K2C1 / Topic Code 21 / CDA 3

Hitting, grabbing, pushing, and biting: how do children learn to play nicely? Children can learn to solve their own problems, but they need adults to teach them how to do it.

#### December 13, 2007

##### Math for Every Age

Professional Development Code K2C1 / Topic Code 17 / CDA 2

If you're able to add 1 + 1 and get 2, you can do math with children. Learn what young children understand about math at each age and simple math activities to do with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

#### March 13, 2008

##### Science for Young Thinkers

Professional Development Code K2C1/ Topic Code187 / CDA 2

You don't have to be a rocket scientist to help future scientists learn the basics. Find out how to make science activities really fun for children and adults.

#### May 15, 2008

##### Improving Transition Times

Professional Development Code K2C2 / Topic Code 13 / CDA 1

Moving from place to place, activity to activity, is often filled with tears, screaming, and tantrums. Learn how you can smooth transitions to make them productive, fun times for children and stress free for adults.

Visit the [Satellite Workshop](#) link for more information.

Missed a show? Visit the [Past Satellite Workshop](#) page to view video online. If you live in Pennsylvania, contact your [local extension educator](#) for information to attend a workshop in your area. Outside Pennsylvania view [Out-of-State Information](#) link.

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## Professional Development Highlights

Interested in professional development opportunities? Take a look at the following professional development training available for early childhood practitioners:

- **August 14** - Developing Oral Language for Young Learners, [Pennsylvania Department of Education](#), Harrisburg PaTTan, contact [Carolyn Gallo](#)
- **August 17 & 18**- Parents as Partners; A Conference for Parents of Children with Special Needs, Warren, PA 16265, Contact Marty Rist at [mrsit@pattanpgh.net](mailto:mrsit@pattanpgh.net) or 800-446-5607, ext. 6830
- **September 15** - Northwest Key Professional Development Day, Bradford, PA Contact Yolanda Tamlin, [yolandat@nwir.org](mailto:yolandat@nwir.org), 800-860-281
- **September 29** - Family Child Care Entrepreneur Program, Philadelphia, PA, Women's Business Development Center 215-790-9232

## Professional Development Highlights (continued)

- **October 6** - Together We're Better: Partnering with Families and the Community, York AEYC <http://www.yaaeyc.org/>
- **October 10 - 12** - Early Learning: Creating a Foundation for the Future, PACCA 2007 conference, The Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel, State College, PA
- November 3 - Pike County Fall Professional Development Conference; Managing Conflict and Diversity Means Differences Among People, Milford, PA 570-296-3400, [pike.ext@psu.edu](mailto:pike.ext@psu.edu)
- **December 6 - 7** - Pennsylvania Head Start Association Fall Conference, Harrisburg [www.paheadstart.org](http://www.paheadstart.org)

For more professional development opportunities, visit the [PA Keys](#) online calendar.

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### CDA News! (Child Development Associate credential)

#### **New Guidelines for PA Keys to Professional Development Refund Voucher Program – effective July 1, 2007 -**

The professional development refund voucher program provides the opportunity for reimbursement for child care staff for courses that earn college credits (including Child Development Associate Professional Development Programs) and payment for the CDA assessment fee.

#### **New Requirement for payment of the CDA assessment fee (\$325)**

- Students must be currently employed in OCDEL Keystone STARS program designated STAR 1 or higher

Download the [CDA Assessment Fee Voucher Application](#) to apply for CDA Assessment fee payment.

View all the new PA Key professional development refund voucher program guidelines on Better Kid Care's [CDA page](#)

#### **Get CDA Support!**

Call Better Kid Care today at 800-452-9108. Talk with someone who can help you get started in the CDA credential process.

E-mail your CDA questions to Christine at [crb16@psu.edu](mailto:crb16@psu.edu)

Visit the Better Kid Care "[What is the CDA?](#)" link for more information

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## **Better Kid Care Resources**

### **Better Kid Care Mentoring Telephone Help Line for Child Care Providers in Pennsylvania**

Do you have questions about caring for other people's children, such as:

- How do I get a child to eat?
- Why won't a child share?
- How do I stop a child from biting other children?
- What should I do when a parent doesn't pay on time?



Call the **Better Kid Care Mentoring Line** at 800-859-8340 or e-mail your questions to [betterkidcare@psu.edu](mailto:betterkidcare@psu.edu) for information about child care and children's issues.

## **Better Kid Care Kit**

Need ideas in your work caring for children? When you enroll in the Better Kid Care Program and sign up for the Better Kid Care Kit, family child care providers will receive several free publications in the mail. Family home child care providers will also receive [The Basics of Caring for Children in your Home](#) notebook to organize and store your Better Kid Care publications. Have you signed up to receive a Better Kid Care Kit yet? Complete our [online registration form](#) or call **800-452-9108** to order.

Notebook Contains: [Tip Sheets](#), [Activities Pages](#) & [Lunch and Snack Ideas](#)

All publications are available online to print and share with your friends, family, and other childcare providers. *Select issues are also available in Spanish.*

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[New Staff Orientation](#) curriculum is specifically designed for new staff members in child care centers. *Meets the Keystone STARS Performance Standards.* Order at no cost by calling 800-452-9108. Prepayment for review of each Orientation is \$5.00. If you received materials before November 1, 2006, please download new [Instructions and REQUIRED Forms](#).

[Home-Based Caregiver Orientation](#) - *Meets the Keystone STARS Core Series Training Requirements.* Order at no cost by calling 800-452-9108. Prepayment for review of each Orientation is \$5.00. If you received materials before November 1, 2006, please download new [Instructions & REQUIRED Forms](#).

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## **Announcements of Interest:**

**Kids Count Data Book**- On July 25, 2007, the Annie E. Casey Foundation released the 18th annual KIDS COUNT Data Book, a national and state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the U.S. Find out more at [18th Annual KIDS COUNT Data Book](#)

**Natural Learning Initiative** is a Research and Design Assistance Program of the College of Design, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC, USA. Discover more about creating environments for healthy human development and a healthy biosphere for generations to come by visiting the [Natural Learning Initiative](#) web site.

**Nature Explore Program** - the National Arbor Day Foundation has launched the [Nature Explore Program](#), offering fun and effective resources for educators, parents, and caregivers to connect young children with nature.

**PA Early Learning Standards** - The Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards were developed as a joint project of the Departments of Education and Public Welfare as part of Governor Rendell's commitment to early childhood education and care to guide the development of pre-kindergarten programs and infant and toddler programs. Pennsylvania's Early Learning Standards are available for downloading: [Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards](#)

**Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts** – Learn more about the [Pre-K Counts program](#) by visiting web site.

The **National Center for Learning Disabilities** has created a new Parent Advocacy Brief, [Preschool Services Under IDEA](#), to help parents understand their children's education rights.

## **Announcements of Interest (continued):**

### **Family Involvement Network - [Harvard Family Research Project](#)**

Family involvement matters for young children's cognitive and social development. But what do effective involvement processes look like, and how do they occur? This research brief summarizes the latest evidence base on effective involvement—that is, the research studies that link family involvement in early childhood to outcomes and programs that have been evaluated to show what works.

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## **Would you like to receive this newsletter?**

New subscribers can join by sending an email to: [BetterKidCareNews-subscribe-request@lists.psu.edu](mailto:BetterKidCareNews-subscribe-request@lists.psu.edu).

View archived [Better Kid Care E-Newsletters](#)

**Upcoming September E-Newsletter:  
Look for information on  
Routines and Rituals: Creating a Sense of Place**

## **Reflections...**

We would love to hear from you! **E-mail your ideas to [crb16@psu.edu](mailto:crb16@psu.edu) or call 814-865-7894.**

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