

E-Newsletter -- January 2008

Happy New Year Newsletter Subscribers!

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



Notable Quote: "It is a happy talent to know how to play." -
Ralph Waldo Emerson

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Tips for Early Educators and Practitioners:

Soothing Choices

"After our winter holiday break, many children come back seeming "unsettled." To help children settle back into their care community, offer lots of soothing choices. Here are two great ideas:

1. Sensory motor choices - offer materials such as clay, water, paint, and sand. This provides an outlet for expressing feelings and just plain feels good!
2. Stretch and breathe time - while playing soft, relaxing music, guide the children through simple "imagery stretches" such as a little bunny reaching up to hug his mommy or a flower starting to grow from a seed; growing tall, reaching to the sun, feeling its warmth. The children come up with amazing stretching ideas. We also teach them to deep breathe in and exhale out. Very relaxing!"

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 or contact the Better Kid Care Program at 814-865-7894 or 800-452-9108 (within PA).

Feature Article



Play: "Can You Hear Me Now?" *Listening to the Voice of Play*

by Christine Belinda

"The importance of play" is a theme that arises repeatedly in child care books, magazines, and professional development resources. There are even organizations whose single purpose is to help project the important voice of play and play-based practices. What are the voices of play trying to tell us?

Play: "Can you hear me now?"

Those listening to what is currently being said about play will hear many voices. Most voices of play are based on child development and in uncovering the roles, relevance, and knowledge connected to play.

Research in play suggests that not only is play needed for the healthy development of young children, but play supports higher level cognitive thinking, language development, self regulation, social skills, and physical development. Play also has been defined as one of the optimal ways children learn compassion, self confidence, and self-motivation. On the flip side of play research is mounting evidence that play is diminishing in the lives of young children.

Educators, health professionals, and researchers know how important play is in the lives of children, but many are clearly seeing the consequences of diminishing play. Authentic, pure forms of play are often replaced with electronic time, toys and materials lacking in creative value, structured activities, expectations for educational outcomes, and the hurried shuffled lives of busy families.



The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has developed a clinical report titled "The Importance of Play in Promoting Healthy Child Development and Maintaining Strong Parent-Child Bonds." This report offers guidelines on how pediatricians can advocate for children by helping families, school systems, and communities consider how best to ensure play is protected as they seek to create the optimal developmental setting for children. To view report online go to: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/119/1/182>

The voice of play

The voice of play is ever present when you are an early educator. Children will turn any time and anything into play (this alone can portray the magic and value of play). We've all watched play's phenomena unfold right in front of us. Think of the child at snack time that has lined up all her crackers and has given voices, names, and actions to

each dancing cracker and initiates a conversation with you (of course, in a "dancing cracker voice"!). For children, play is in everything, on everything, a part of everything....play is children.



Educator Leo Bascaglia says: *"It is paradoxical that many educators and parents still differentiate between a time for learning and a time for play without seeing the vital connection between them."*

Passionate early educators are always listening to the voice of play. But maybe it is time to turn up the volume a bit and campaign for children's play and balance what we bring to children. Maybe by listening to the voice of play we will hear the children.

A little bit of help for listening to the voice of play:

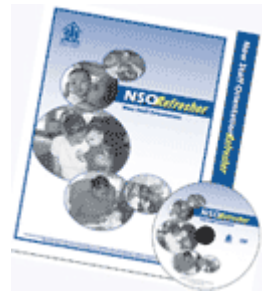
- Know your philosophy on play
- Explore and research play; read articles, books, and discuss the role of play with colleagues, children, and families
- Know your state's Early Learning Standards and seek training and literature on implementing such ideas into an exciting curriculum that intentionally supports best practices in child development
- Communicate to parents the importance of play
- Stop, listen, and look; observe and document play. Discover what is working, what's not, what occurs, who interacts, what your role should be, and most importantly, where the fun, joy, and learning are occurring!

Distance Education Highlights



New Staff Orientation REFRESHER!

The *New Staff Orientation Refresher* gives experienced educators in a new position an opportunity to review the most basic information in caring for children.



- Each of the six units has a 15-minute video segment (DVD) and a corresponding workbook page
- Videos are based on the original *New Staff Orientation*
- New workbook with assignments to complete
- Awards three (3) professional development hours

Visit the [New Staff Orientation REFRESHER](#) page for more information on how to order and view material.

To view a complete listing of **all** distance education lessons and additional information about how to register, visit the [Better Kid Care Distance Education](#) page or download the NEW! Distance Education Brochure:



Brochure can also be requested by calling 800-452-9108

Health and Safety Tips

Treating Kids' Colds Without Drugs

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) applauds the decision to withdraw cough and cold medicines for infants and children. These medicines are ineffective and can have serious side effects. Several studies show that these products are not effective in children under six and can have potentially serious side effects. Dosage guidelines for cold and cold mixtures are based on adult data and thus inaccurate for children. The Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA) has information on the cough and cold medicines that are being withdrawn. To read more visit: <http://www.aap.org/new/kidcolds.htm>



Turn the Page

Great Books to Read with Children: Wonderful Winter!

The Snowflake, by Kenneth Libbrecht, published by Voyager Press, ISBN 0896586308. Microphotographs of real snowflakes that show the amazing beauty and science behind nature's own snowflake.

Millions of Snowflakes, by Mary McKenna Siddals, published by Clarion Books, ISBN 0395715318. The snow is falling all around a girl and her dog. Read of the child's delight to count, touch, and taste the snowflakes as she is all bundled up and enjoying the snow.

First Day of Winter, by Denise Fleming, published by Henry Holt and Co., ISBN 0805073841. This book follows the pattern of the Twelve Days of Christmas with such lines as "On the first day of winter, my best friend gave to me...a red cap"

The Three Snow Bears, by Jan Brett, published by Putnam Juvenile, ISBN 0399247920. Aloo-ki comes across an igloo and, being a curious girl, she looks inside. Find out who lives inside the igloo and what happens when Aloo-ki goes into the igloo (think about the story of the three bears).

Flannel Kisses, by Linda Crotta Brennan, published by Houghton Mifflin, ISBN 06187529. A rhyming poem of the wonderful outdoors of winter as well as the warm and cozy inside of winter.

More stories of winter. . .

The Jacket I Wear in the Snow, by Shirley Neitzel, published by Mulberry Books, ISBN 0688127711

Snow, by Uri Shulevitz, published by Sunburst Books, ISBN 0374468621

In the Snow: Who's Been Here?, by Lindsay Barrett George, published by HarperTrophy, ISBN 0688170560

When It Starts to Snow, by Phillis Gershator, published by Amazon Remainders Account, ISBN 0805054049

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.



Quality Time with Your Kids

by Nancy Wilson

Young children love computer games, MP3 players, and video games. Many children want to spend many hours using them each day. Parents need to limit time spent with these activities, making sure their child is doing other things such as outdoor play and exercise. It is important to maintain your values and do what is good for your child.

<--- Click on the graphic to read the entire article

Better Kid Care Satellite Season 2007-08:

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:

Next up! March 13, 2008

Science for Young Thinkers

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

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.

CDA News! (Child Development Associate credential)

Coming soon from the Council for Professional Recognition: Online Assessment! The Council's Online Assessment is expected to debut in September 2008, and information about the system is now available online at: http://www.cdacouncil.org/CDA_online.htm. There you can access a brochure and a video about the new process.

Visit the Better Kid Care "[What is the CDA?](#)" newly revised link and get answers to your CDA questions! Find easy-to-follow information on what you need to know to get started toward earning your CDA credential. Best of all, the Better Kid Care Program has a live contact person who can answer your CDA questions! Get CDA Support! Call Christine at 800-452-9108. E-mail your CDA questions to Christine at crb16@psu.edu.

Professional Development Highlights

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

In Pennsylvania:

- **January 18** - Practical Strategies for Dealing with Behavioral Issues and Disorders, Central Intermediate Unit, West Decatur, PA 814-342-0884
- **January 26** - Early Years Conference, PSU Cooperative Extension, State College, PA 814-355-4897
- **February 6 - 9** - Region III Fatherhood/Male Involvement and Healthy Marriage Institute, visit: www.paheadstart.org or call 215-861-4060
- **February 7** - Creating an Inclusive Multicultural Environment, CIU West Decatur, PA 814-342-0884
- **February 11** - Transition to Kindergarten, Central Intermediate Unit, West Decatur, PA 814-342-0884
- **February 23** - Focus on Strong Families Conference, State College, PA For more information about the conference, people may contact conference co-chairs: [Connie Schulz](mailto:Connie.Schulz@psu.edu), 814-231-1070; [Donna Ricketts](mailto:Donna.Ricketts@psu.edu), 814-231-1061; or [Ann Walker](mailto:Ann.Walker@psu.edu), 814-238-5480.
- **February 29 - March 2** - PAEE Environmental Education and Play in Nature: Leap In! Conference, Bolivar, PA, www.paee.net, 412 963-6100 x24
- **March 7** - The Effects of Stress and Trauma on the Developing Brain, Fulton County Center for Families, McConnellsburg, PA 717-485- 5038
- **May 8 - 9** - The Cyert Center Program for Collaborative Learning will hold its 9th annual Visitation Day. The Visitation Day schedule is designed to offer observation in the classrooms while the program is in session and also includes presentations by the Cyert Center educators and parents. 412-268-2149 or visit: <http://www.cmu.edu/cyert-center/Professional%20Development/index.html>
- **March 29** - Building Blocks to Early Learning Conference, Dubois, PA, Penn State Cooperative Extension, 814-765-7878 x5
- **March 29** - Media Literacy: The Power of Commercial Media Targeting Children, WQLN Educational Services, Erie, PA, 814-864-3001, www.quin/education
- **April 5** - Create, Innovate, Educate, Central Susquehanna AEYC Conference, 570-594-0732
- **April 10 -12** - DVAEYC, Delaware Valley Association of the Education of Young Children, 215-893-0130, http://www.dvaeyc.org/annual_conference.html
- **April 25** - Learning Early Conference, Sayre, PA, 570-268-2787, [Annual Conference](http://www.learningearly.org)
- **April 26 and 27** - PA Home-Based Child Care Providers Association Annual Training Conference, Providers & Parents Untied for Excellence, State College, PA 800-294-3324
- **May 29 - 30** - PA Higher Education Institute, State College, PA 717-213-2064, beraho@berksiu.org

Other:

- North American Reggio Alliance (NARA) feature listing of conferences and workshops <http://www.reggioalliance.org/professional/ci.php>
- Ounce Scale Implementation Institute, various dates and locations, contact www.pattan.net
- The Work Sampling System Implementation Institutes, various dates and locations, contact www.pattan.net
- PA Director Credential Program – Leadership and Management, Early Development and Education Institute, PSU, State College, PA 814-865-7951
- January 16 - June 4 - Early Childhood Professional Development Course, Level I, 10 three-hour workshops, PA Keys Career Development, 717-771-4164

Outside Pennsylvania:

- **January 25** - 2008 Boston AEYC, Burlington, MA 617-522-0881, www.baeyc.org
- **January 31** - 27th Anchorage AEYC, Anchorage, AK, 907-696-5884
- **February 8** - New Hampshire AEYC, www.nhaeyc.org, 888-225-4884
- **February 14** - Relationships: The Heart and Matter, VAECE, Reston, VA, www.VAECE.org, 703-239-1514

- **February 25 - 27** - National Conference - Children 2008: A Call for Action-Leading the Nation for Children and Families, Washington, DC, www.cwla.org
- **March 6 - 8**, 36th Annual National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers Conference, Stand up and Be Heard! Washington, D.C. <http://www.campuschildren.org/conference.html>
- **March 28** - New Mexico, AEYC Albuquerque, NM, www.nmaeyc.org, 505-823-0975
- **March 30** - National Conference on Family Literacy, www.familit.org
- **June 9-11** - NAEYC National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development, New Orleans, LA, 800-424-2460, www.naeyc.org

More professional development resources:

- Better Kid Care Distance Education <http://betterkidcare.psu.edu/page02a.html>
- PA Keys Training Calendar [Professional Development Calendar](#)
- NAEYC Affiliate Conferences <http://www.naeyc.org/conferences/affiliate/results.asp?list=1>

Announcements of Interest:

Week of the Young Child 2008: Bring Communities Together for Children – Children Bring Communities Together - Week of the Young Child is April 13-19, 2008! Check out these resources and start planning ways to bring your community together for children!

[Week of the Young Child 2008 Event Planning Handbook](#)

[Share Your WOYC 2008 Plans](#)

[Key Facts](#)

[Community Partners](#)

[Suggested Activities](#)

[WOYC Resources](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions](http://naeyc.org/about/woyc/feedback.asp) <http://naeyc.org/about/woyc/feedback.asp>

[WOYC in the News](#)

PA Department of Education

[Early Childhood Education](#) - Attention Early Learning Program Directors: Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts pre-kindergarten program could bring quality pre-kindergarten to more than 11,000 three- and four-year-olds next year. Learn more by downloading [Flyer](#)

Use Updated Vaccine Schedules

Every January the nation's experts release an updated schedule of the vaccines that children should have. Look for this schedule on the Web site of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) www.cdc.gov/vaccines The 2008 Immunization Schedule was released 1/2/2008 and posted at www.cispimmunize.org/.

Influenza Season Is Here - Use Updated Resources

To cope with the influenza season, educators will find guidance, fact sheets, posters (cover-your-cough and hand washing) as well as other materials on the Web site of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Go to <http://www.cdc.gov/flu>. Look for the heading "Info for Specific Groups." Under that heading, click on "Schools & Childcare Providers." Many materials are available in different languages.

Where Do the Children Play? - This new 55-minute PBS documentary, produced by Michigan Television, is now available for public showings by schools, universities, and community organizations. The brainchild of Elizabeth Goodenough, the film examines the social and technological trends that conspire to rob children of their birthright: time and opportunity for unstructured, spontaneous play, especially outdoors in nature. For more information, e-mail Pam Lotz, pam@allianceforchildhood.org, or call 301-779-1033.

Brainy Kids Online - Online science resources for kids, parents, and educators. Visit:

<http://www.dana.org/resources/brainykids/>

American Star of Teaching - The U.S. Department of Education's Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative is accepting nominations for 2008 American Stars of Teaching until March 31. Parents, students, colleagues, school administrators, and others can nominate an exemplary teacher who they believe has the qualities to be an American Star of Teaching. We are seeking nominations of teachers across the United States who are improving student achievement, using innovative strategies in the classroom, and making a difference in the lives of their students. Teachers across all grade levels and disciplines will be honored as 2008 American Stars of Teaching this fall. To nominate a teacher, go to: <http://www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/index.html>.

Power of Play: Learning Through Play From 0-3 - Booklet exploring how play supports children's development in all areas. Offers age-based information for parents on the benefit of play from birth to three. Available online at [Zero To Three](#)

Web site booklet links: [\[265 KB !\[\]\(6605b201d6f14d9b3bcb8ab5f274d107_img.jpg\)](#)] [\[en Espanol !\[\]\(f4056bb2e5acf0a782fb9d812dad489d_img.jpg\)](#)]

ECELS - The Early Childhood Education Linkage System - Healthy Child Care Pennsylvania of the PA Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics, welcomes your e-mail and phone questions on health, safety, and nutrition in early learning and school-age programs. Staff will respond to your questions within 24 hours. Call ECELS toll free at 800-243-2357 or email: ecels_techassistance@paaap.org For more information visit: <http://www.ecels-healthychildcarepa.org/index.cfm>

Bright Futures

In December 2007, the AAP issued a policy statement called Bright Futures, which includes a new schedule for routine check-up visits. The AAP recommended that health professionals perform developmental measurements at 9, 18, and 24 or 30 months. Thereafter, well child visits should include looking for signals of risk for developmental delay and need for more developmental and behavioral screening. The clinician should do an autism-specific screen at 18 months and again at 24 months. The AAP added a 30 month visit to the schedule of well child visits to provide more time over the course of early childhood checkups to focus on developmental issues in addition to all the other services health providers offer to families American Academy of Pediatrics Web site access: <http://brightfutures.aap.org/web/>

The Medicated Child - With more than four million children now on behavior modifying medications--some starting as young as two years old—"Frontline" continues its investigation into the controversial practice of medicating kids. Are the drugs safe? How young can you detect mental illness in a child? Is medication really the answer?

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/medicatedchild/>

Grants for In-School Music Projects - The Mockingbird Foundation is offering grants for in-school music projects that promote creative expression through music. Applications are encouraged to be diverse or to include unusual musical styles, genres, forms, and philosophies. Deadline: February 1, 2008.

<http://www.mockingbirdfoundation.org/funding/guidelines.html>

Nutrition & Your Child is a research-based newsletter produced by the USDA/ARS Children's Nutrition Research Center (CNRC) at Baylor College of Medicine and electronically distributed in cooperation with USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) to enhance the research base for educational programming. It is sent only to individuals who have subscribed to the newsletter. View this issue as a "newsletter formatted" Adobe file at:

http://www.kidsnutrition.org/images/pdfs_nyc/2008/vol1.pdf.

Time to Prepare for Pennsylvania's One Book, Every Young Child Campaign - The Pennsylvania One Book, Every Young Child kick-off is less than three months away—April 1! The planning committee is pleased to announce that the Verizon Foundation will again fund the distribution of a copy of the book and poster for each child care, Head Start, Family Literacy, and PA Pre-K Counts facility in the state. The books will be mailed to programs in March. The web site (www.paonebook.org) will go live in February.

Programs and organizations also have another opportunity to buy paperbacks, hardbacks and big book editions. The [attached order form](#) is due February 1. This will likely be the last chance to order books for the spring.

Better Kid Care Resources

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.*

[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](#).

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 for information about child care and children's issues.

Subscribe to the BKC E-Newsletter!

New subscribers can join by sending an email to: BetterKidCareNews-subscribe-request@lists.psu.edu.

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

Upcoming Feature Article in February E-Newsletter: Play with Clay

Reflections...

We would love to hear from you! E-mail your ideas to crb16@psu.edu or call 814-865-7894.

Disclaimer: Where trade names appear, no discrimination is intended, and no endorsement by Penn State Cooperative Extension is implied.