

E-Newsletter – May 2009

A newsletter for those caring for children.

Notable Quote:

Far away in the sunshine are my highest aspirations. I may not reach them, but I can look up and see their beauty, believe in them, and try to follow where they lead.

Louisa May Alcott

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Tips for Early Educators and Practitioners: NAEYC Radio: Did you know?

NAEYC Radio - Did you know the *National Association for the Education of Young Children* (NAEYC) and *Body, Mind and Child* have partnered to bring you NAEYC Radio? Rae Pica and Mark Ginsberg host the program which focuses on a different topic each month. *Body, Mind and Child* was developed by early childhood professionals to bring the best and latest insights and knowledge directly to parents. Listen to NAEYC Radio at <http://www.naeyc.org/about/radio/>

On NAEYC Radio this month: Mimi Brodsky Chenfeld, Encouraging Creativity in Children
<http://www.naeyc.org/about/radio/>

Send us your best tips! Email Christine at crb16@psu.edu or contact the Better Kid Care Program at 814-865-7894 or 800-452-9108.

Feature Article - Nature: "Remember me?" A Call to Go Outside

The change of seasons is like a tap on the shoulder from nature as if to say, "Remember me?" It is with good reason we are reminded of nature. The number of hours children spend outside has decreased significantly. A *Kaiser Family Foundation* study found that the average American child spends **44 hours per week** (more than 6 hours a day) experiencing electronic screen time (inside). According to *Green Hour*, a Web site for caregivers and parents created by the *National Wildlife Federation*,

"As a society, we are raising the first generation of Americans to grow up disconnected from nature."

The changing landscape of children's play is changing noticeably, from outside to inside. As shared by the *Children and Nature Network*, the removal of nature-related words from a dictionary is another cause for concern:

"A decision to replace words like "beaver" and "dandelion" with "blog" and "MP3 player" has prompted some to react with outrage. As noted wildlife artist and conservationist Robert Bateman observed, "If you can't name things, how can you love them? And if you don't love them, then you're not going to care a hoot about protecting them or voting for issues that would protect them." ~ *Children and Nature Network, Research and News, 4/09*

The good news is that nature's tap on the shoulder is being heard. Not only can we now find a wealth of research available on the importance on nature, but we can also find easy ways to welcome (back) nature.

As someone who is significant to children, spends a lot of time with children, and builds relationships with families, the early educator is an important messenger and friend to nature; who better to welcome nature with children?

There are those who are completely comfortable and embrace nature, where others may need support and time to reflect on their ideas about nature. What was nature like for you as a child? How do you feel about nature today? Our perceptions of nature are shaped by our memories, events, and experiences; they are an important part of how we look at nature. Understanding how we feel about nature will also help us share nature with children.

Reflect on: Where did you play in nature? Who were you with? What did you do? What parts of nature did you explore? How did you feel when you were in nature? How much time did you spend outdoors?

More reflection: In what ways do you feel nature is good for children? What do you think your role should be in sharing nature with children? Are there any obstacles in sharing nature with children?

A Call to go Outside

Being outside is valuable to everyone; it provides a fresh perspective and a change of scenery from the indoors. The outdoors offers beauty, curiosity, and limitless learning experiences. As David Sobel states in his book, *Childhood and Nature: Design Principles for Educators*, "One transcendent experience in nature is worth a thousand nature facts."

Not only does outside play enrich the creative and learning process, but it also supports overall healthy development. Spending time outdoors is said to lower stress levels, encourage the opportunity for physical exercise, and build strong immune systems. Some researchers believe spending time in nature supports fewer symptoms of ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) and ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder).

When to go Outside?

Sometimes it can be hard to tell if the weather is okay for children to go outside. According to **PA ECELS Healthy Child Care**, to determine when it is appropriate to be outside, follow *Playing Outdoors (Standard)*

2.009 from *Caring For Our Children, the National Health and Safety Performance Standards, 2nd edition*, part of which is quoted here:

“Children shall play outdoors daily when weather and air quality conditions do not pose a significant health risk. Outdoor play for infants may include riding in a carriage or stroller; however, infants shall be offered opportunities for gross motor play outdoors, as well. Weather that poses a significant health risk shall include wind chill at or below 15 degrees F and heat index at or above 90 degrees F, as identified by the National Weather Service. Air quality conditions that pose a significant health risk shall be identified by announcements from local health authorities or through ozone (smog) alerts...”

As highlighted by *PA ECELS-Healthy Child Care*, **for healthy development, children, including infants, should go outside when:**

- The weather seems comfortable and when it is somewhat uncomfortable. People respond to weather based on their experience with different climates. Usually even in extreme weather, children can spend at least 15 minutes outside, and more time if they are dressed appropriately and the play area is protected. In summer, the children should wear light-colored, lightweight, sun-protective clothing and use a play area with shade and a supply of drinking water. In winter, children should dress in warm, dry layers and play in an area with wind barriers.
- It is snowing and raining, or when snow is on the ground and the children are wearing water-resistant clothing so they do not become soaked or chilled. Snow and rain are important materials for learning.
- Children have a runny nose, a cold, or ear infection, unless they have a condition identified by their primary health provider (doctor or nurse practitioner) that the health provider documents can be worsened by cold, wind, or being outdoors. Health professionals try to manage these conditions so they do not interfere with a child’s normal restrictions.

Welcome (back) nature: Simple ideas to connect with nature

Simply getting outdoors is a wonderful way to welcome nature. Firsthand experiences with the outdoors are important in creating an understanding of and a bond with the natural world. These personal relationships with nature will build over time and help children see the natural world on a larger scale.

When teaching children about nature, remember that the best learning experiences occur when the focus is on the child’s journey of natural discovery. By supporting the child’s natural explorations, we encourage the child to not only become familiar with nature, but to have direct experiences that provoke their own thoughts, questions, and problem solving. It is this type of experience that bridges the individual desire to want to know more with acquiring the skills to explore more, allowing learning to happen in its own time.

In his book, *A Natural Sense of Wonder: Connecting Kids with Nature through the Seasons*, Rick Van Noy refers to "time out," or time in nature, as a way to foster discovery and exploration, and to build connections socially and biologically. He says that "time out"(side) encourages a healthy child with- "in." In Van Noy's response to nature teaching life lessons, he states, “School is all around us. Why skip class?”

Discover the wonder of nature:

Plan time outside every day. Watch and observe children's interests. Take time to explore the surrounding natural environments.

Let outdoor explorations be supported over long periods of time, not just a "two-week unit." Follow the curiosities of the children.

Open the window (weather permitting).

Encourage natural collections of outdoor materials and display these inside and outside. Collections spark the interest of "what's out there?", "what will I find?", and "what could this be?"

Allow for lots of physical exploration: running, jumping, climbing, digging, etc.

Pretend to be animals, bugs, birds, and trees. Use fantasy as "outdoor dramatic play."

Spend time listening to nature. Guess what sounds are heard. Record your own nature sounds.

Start an umbrella collection from families so enough umbrellas are collected to go out on rainy days.

Go on outdoor walks/hikes; make "maps" of what was uncovered.

Allow inside materials to be used outside, such as blankets or other items of interest.

References

The Kaiser Family Foundation Report, *The Media Family: Electronic Media in the Lives of Infants, Toddlers, Preschoolers and their Parents*, retrieved April 7, 2009, from [greenhour.org](http://www.greenhour.org)

Web sites

Green Hour - <http://www.greenhour.org/section/about/info/campaign>, visited April 7, 2009

Children and Nature Network - <http://www.childrenandnature.org/>, *Exercise for Health, Go Outdoors, Weather Permitting*, visited April 7, 2009

PA ECELS-Healthy Child Care, *Health Link Online*, - <http://www.ecels-healthychildcarepa.org/content/4-1-09%20v7vol%2021%20spring%20%202009%20HL%20ONLINE.pdf>, retrieved April 8, 2009

Books

A Natural Sense of Wonder: Connecting Kids with Nature through the Seasons, by Rick Van Noy

Childhood and Nature: Design Principles for Educators, by David Sobel

Beyond Echophobia: Reclaiming the Heart in Nature Education, by David Sobel

Research-Based Information

Crisis in the Kindergarten: Why Children Need to Play in School, a report from the Alliance for Childhood - The importance of play to young children's healthy development and learning has been documented beyond question by research. Yet play is rapidly disappearing from kindergarten and early education as a whole. This report is meant to bring broad public attention to the crisis in our kindergartens and to spur collective action to reverse the damage now being done. View the report at http://www.allianceforchildhood.org/sites/allianceforchildhood.org/files/file/Kindergarten_8-page_summary.pdf

States Expand Newborn Screening for Life-Threatening Disorders - Regardless of where they are born in the United States, nearly all newborns now receive mandated screening for many life-threatening disorders, a

remarkable public health advance of the last four years, according to a new report issued by the March of Dimes. Find more information at http://www.marchofdimes.com/aboutus/22684_51920.asp

Connecting Neurons, Concepts, and People: Brain Development and Its Implications - This paper from *The National Institute for Early Education Research* provides a synthesis of the research on early neurobiological development and suggests various policy recommendations. While the study of human brain development is still in its infancy, several new technologies are allowing for more direct examination of brain functioning than older approaches. This policy brief summarizes what is known about early neurobiological development. <http://nieer.org/resources/policybriefs/17.pdf>

Distance Education Highlights – Family Child Care Course

Are you aware that Better Kid Care provides comprehensive curricula in early childhood development? The Better Kid Care curriculum follows the PA Core Body of Knowledge and offers multiple course titles to choose from. Each course offers numerous Distance Education lessons, providing a well-rounded approach to obtaining your professional development. View the entire Better Kid Care Distance Education curriculum on line at www.betterkidcare.psu.edu and choose your course of study today! Register for a lesson or try an entire course!

WE CARE!

Featured Course: The Family Child Care Course: Try the entire course or simply choose your favorite lesson!

Getting the Word Out: Marketing your Family Child Care, explores how to market your home child care business, whether you are just starting out or have been caring for children for a while. Discover why marketing is an important part of your business and how to present yourself to families and the community as a professional child care provider.

Running Your Child Care Home as a Business, looks at the personal and business benefits of operating a family child care home. Examine what this career choice means for you and your family.

Professional Development Records (PDR) – A Valuable Tool for Child Care Providers - Research shows that well trained, skilled child care providers offer the best care for children. The Professional Development Record (PDR) lists what child care providers need to know and what skills they should have to offer quality care. In this lesson, you will explore how to use a PDR, where to get a PDR, and how the PDR will support your work and professional development.

For a complete listing of **all** Distance Education curricula, courses, lessons, and information about how to register, visit the [Better Kid Care Distance Education](http://www.betterkidcare.psu.edu/page02a.html) page. (<http://www.betterkidcare.psu.edu/page02a.html>)

Health and Safety Tips - Talking to Parents about Autism

Autism Speaks, in partnership with the Ad Council and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, launched an educational tool kit, *Talking to Parents about Autism*, designed to promote early intervention and encourage educators to speak to a child's parents if they suspect a developmental delay. This is the first program to provide teachers with tools to prepare to begin this critical dialogue.

The new kit includes a *Talking to Parents about Autism* training DVD that features information and advice about how educators can best broach the topic of a potential developmental delay. Also included in the tool kit is an *Early Childhood Milestone Map*, which can be printed and distributed to parents so that they can more easily track their child's progress against the typical, age-specific developmental milestones. Research has shown that early detection and intervention can make a significant difference in the life of a child with autism. Educators, who interact with and observe children on a daily basis, are in the ideal position to know if a child's development seems delayed. The entire kit, available in both English and Spanish, is available at http://www.autismspeaks.org/whatisit/talking_to_parents_action_kit.php.

Turn the Page

Great Books to Read with Children - Stories of Nature and whimsy

Roxaboxen, by Alice McLerran and Barbara Clooney, published by HarperTrophy, ISBN 0060526335, celebrates how children and their imaginations to make fanciful things become magically real and make them last forever.

Those Summers, by Alikei, published by HarperCollins, ISBN 0060249374. Alikei offers vivid memories of childhood summers spent at the ocean with her cousins, parents, aunts, and uncles. The family engages in activities that are common to any beach outing: building sand castles, swimming, and drawing pictures in the sand.

A Log's Life, by Wendy Pfeffer, published by Aladdin, ISBN 1416934839, introduces readers to the life cycle of a tree. The informative, lyrical text is complemented by stunning, three-dimensional paper sculptures that showcase the forest ecosystem, inspiring readers to take a close look at the trees -- and logs -- in their own backyards.

More to read:

How to Hide a Butterfly and Other Insects, by Ruth Heller, published by Grosset & Dunlap, ISBN 044840477X
Bugs Are Insects, by Ann Rockwell, published by HarperCollins, ISBN 0064452034

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**.

How to Help Your Child When Bad Things Happen

Happy times and sad times are a part of life. Parents naturally want to protect their children from bad things that happen, but that is not always possible. Children do need to learn how to deal with times when sad or bad things occur. Some examples of things that can happen are the death of a beloved relative or a pet. It might be moving to a different home or a friend moving away. Parents separating or going through a divorce is very difficult for a child. There may be a natural disaster such as a blizzard, flood, or tornado. A child might witness a crime or some kind of violence. Many families have a parent or other relative in the military, possibly in a war area. This will cause a child to have fears for her safety.

What can you do to help your child through sad or frustrating times?

Here are some suggestions:

- Help your child talk about her feelings. Say, “You’re feeling sad right now because your friend Mindy moved away. You miss her and it makes you feel sad. Do you want to talk about it?”
- Talk about your feelings some times when you are feeling sad. This will show your child how you deal with your feelings.
- Feelings about a move to a new home can be both happy and sad. Let your child know that it’s normal to feel both.
- Young children sometimes develop fears. They are not yet able to tell the difference between what is real and what is pretend. You need to let your child know you are there to help and comfort him.
- If a death occurs, do not be afraid to talk about it with your child. Children need to hear the truth.
- It’s ok to cry if you are sad, too. Your child may cry with you. That’s ok. Both of you are showing your feelings and they are honest ones.
- Reading stories about things that make a child sad can be helpful. Your local library should have books about death, divorce, moving, fears, and other topics.
- Children in families going through a divorce or separation need lots of support and attention from both parents. They need to be reassured that they are not to blame. They may feel angry and scared, as well as sad. Those feelings are all normal.
- If you have someone away in the military, talk about how you will miss that person, too. Say, “Daddy is away because he has a job to do and he will miss you, too.” Encourage your child to draw pictures or write letters to keep in touch.
- If there is a natural disaster, reassure your child that you will do your best to take care of her.

Play Can Help Children with Angry or Sad Feelings

When your child is frustrated, angry, or sad about something, he can be helped by certain kinds of play.

Here are ways play can help:

- Play dough activities are great for helping a child work through frustrations. Play dough can be pounded, rolled, and squished in many different ways.
- Give your child some washable markers and some paper to draw on. She can draw furiously with the markers to help negative feelings go away.
- Finger painting and other painting activities can help children calm down.
- Put on some lively music for your child to dance to.
- Give your child a place to dig in the dirt.
- Playing in water is soothing for a child. Fill a plastic tub and put it on a table covered with an old shower curtain or plastic table cloth. Give your child some small plastic containers for pouring water or some small boats to float. Stay close to your child around water.
**To prevent a drowning accident, an adult must always be within arm’s length of a child near water.*
- Have your child crumple old magazine pages or newspaper into balls and throw them into a box or laundry basket.
- Use humor to help. Sing silly songs, say silly poems, or tell funny stories. Laughter is a good cure for sad and bad feelings.

A Few Minutes of Fun

Take some time at the end of a busy work day to go outside and play for a bit with your child. Some suggestions are playing games such as follow the leader, Simon says, tag, rolling a ball back and forth with a younger child, or catch with an older child. The important thing is to have some fun together. A few minutes of fun and active play can help work out frustrations and make everyone's mood more positive!

You are welcome to print and share these publications with your friends, family, and other child care providers.

By Nancy Wilson
Early Childhood Program Specialist



2008-2009 Satellite Season is Here!
Mark your calendar now!

May 14 – Sparking Kids' Curiosity

K2C2 / topic code 11 / CDA Competency 2 / PA Early Learning Standards Key Learning Area:
Approaches to Learning

What's so great about curiosity? Explore how to help kids to grow curiosity. Uncover clever materials to spark children's creative thinking and learning.

About participating . . . Each workshop lasts two hours, including satellite broadcast time, discussion, and group activities. 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.*

Each satellite broadcast can also be viewed online as either a [Live Satellite Broadcast](#) or choose [Past Satellite Broadcast](#) video links.

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.

Want to share your ideas from past satellite sessions or ideas for future satellite sessions? Contact Better Kid Care by emailing us at betterkidcare@psu.edu or by phoning 800-452-9108 to share your comments.

CDA News!

Need CDA help? Visit Better Kid Care's [CDA Information](#) link and get answers to your CDA questions! Call Christine at 800-452-9108 or email your CDA questions to Christine at crb16@psu.edu.

From the Council of Professional Recognition...

CDA: Becoming a CDA Advisor - A CDA Advisor is a professional in early childhood education whose role is to observe the CDA candidate and complete the CDA Assessment Observation Instrument. Individuals interested in becoming a CDA Advisor must meet the eligibility requirements outlined by the Council http://www.cdacouncil.org/CDA_ADV.htm, have an approved waiver, or complete a [Waiver Request Form](#). Interested persons may request the [Advisor Registry Consent Form](#) from the Council at the address given below or may download the [Advisor Registry General Information Packet](#). Completed forms should be accompanied with a copy of a current resume and submitted to:

Council for Professional Recognition
Attention: Advisor Registry
2460 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009-3575

Advisors are encouraged to view and practice recording observations and ratings using the "**How to Use the New CDA Observation Instrument**" DVD, which highlights key points to assist the Advisor in completing the Observation Instrument. This video also includes six observation practice segments. The DVD is available on a two-week loan basis and may be copied before returning it to the Council. To request the DVD, email your name and mailing address to tamiekaw@cdacouncil.org or telephone 800-424-4310 or 202-265-9090 and ask for the Office Operations Department.

The Council also offers Advisor Training sessions in conjunction with early childhood conferences. Scheduled training sessions are listed in the "CDA Training Calendar," located in the CDA Resources section on the Council's Web site at www.cdacouncil.org.

Professional Development Highlights

The following information highlights upcoming professional development opportunities available for early childhood practitioners:

In Pennsylvania:

- **May 14** - Professional Development Day - McKean County, contact 814-765-7878 x5, visit http://www.pakeys.org/private/profdev/prof_dev_event_details.asp?eventid=38227
- **May 15** - Professional Development Day - Clearfield County, contact 814-765-7878 x5 or visit http://www.pakeys.org/private/profdev/prof_dev_event_details.asp?eventid=38230
- **May 19** - The 2009 Family Support Conference: Unlocking Resources: Parent Leadership is the Key, Pittsburgh, PA, email dadick@pitt.edu.
- **June 1-2** - 2nd Annual Higher Education Institute on Diversity: It's Our Future: Investing in Each and Every Young Child, Harrisburg/Hershey, PA, visit <http://www.pakeys.org/docs/DI%20Save%20the%20Date.pdf>

- **June 20-22** - American Evolution: Arts in the New Civic Life, Americans for the Arts Annual Convention, Philadelphia, PA, visit www.americansforthearts.org/events/2008/convention/default.asp.
- **June 28–July 3** – PA Early Childhood Governors Institute, St. Vincent College, Latrobe, PA, view http://www.pde.state.pa.us/early_childhood/lib/early_childhood/ECE_flyerPDE.pdf
- **July 13-17** - PA Early Childhood Governors Institute, Juniata, Huntingdon, PA, view http://www.pde.state.pa.us/early_childhood/lib/early_childhood/ECE_flyerPDE.pdf
- **July 26-31** – PA Early Childhood Governors Institute, Keystone College, La Plume, PA, view http://www.pde.state.pa.us/early_childhood/lib/early_childhood/ECE_flyerPDE.pdf
- **October 26** – Early Childhood Summit, State College, PA, <http://www.earlychildhoodsummit.org/>

Other:

Workshops for Kindergarten Teachers across the Commonwealth - *The Office of Child Development and Early Learning* is excited to announce a full-day professional development opportunity for kindergarten practitioners for 2009.

[http://www.pde.state.pa.us/early_childhood/cwp/view.asp?a=179&q=124400&early_childhoodNav=|10735|&early_childhoodNav=|](http://www.pde.state.pa.us/early_childhood/cwp/view.asp?a=179&q=124400&early_childhoodNav=|10735|&early_childhoodNav=)

Outside of Pennsylvania:

- **May 14**, - Bridging Research and Practice: Relational Interventions for At-Risk Infants and Toddlers, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, visit <http://cehd.umn.edu/ceed/events/HarrisForum/harrisforum.htm#2008>
 - **June 9** – World Forum 2009 on Early Education and Care <http://www.worldforumfoundation.org/wf/wf2009/index.php>
 - **June 28-30**: The Values of the Reggio Emilia Approach, North American Reggio Emilia Alliance, Boulder, CO, visit http://www.reggioalliance.org/narea/annual_conference/current.php
 - **June 30-July 2**: Advanced Study, North American Reggio Emilia Alliance, Boulder, CO, visit http://www.reggioalliance.org/narea/annual_conference/current.php
 - **June 28-July 2**: Comprehensive Experience, North American Reggio Emilia Alliance, Boulder, CO, visit http://www.reggioalliance.org/narea/annual_conference/current.php
 - **July 12-15** – CAYL Institute, Summer Principals Conference, Cambridge, MA, visit <http://www.cayl.org/PrincipalConference2009>
 - **July 20-25** – International Family Day Care Organization Conference, University College, Cork Ireland, visit <http://www.ifdco.com/>
 - **July 21** - Current Issues for Child Care Professionals, Cape May, N.J., contact (215) 785-3400 to register or go to www.childproviderlaw.com, event listed at http://www.pakeys.org/private/profdev/prof_dev_event_details.asp?eventid=41003
 - **July 23–25**: The American Horticultural Society's 2009 National Children & Youth Garden Symposium, *Common Ground: Gardens for a Greener Tomorrow*, Cleveland, Ohio, visit http://www.ahs.org/youth_gardening/national_youth_garden_symposium.htm
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Announcements of Interest:

EARLY EDUCATION

Earth Day Network, founded by the organizers of the first Earth Day in 1970, works through a global network to promote a healthy, sustainable environment for all people. Earth Day Network has developed a series of water-themed lesson plans and activities in support of this year's theme: Be Water Wise! Visit [EE Week's Curricula Library](#) to download the activities, and visit Earth Day Network online for more [education resources](#)

Preschool Curriculum: What's in It for Students and Teachers?

This [publication](#) from the Albert Shanker Institute addresses key areas of preschool content from a curriculum point of view. In four chapters, it addresses oral language, pre-literacy, mathematics, and science. Each chapter indicates appropriate accomplishments for pre-K children, effective instructional practices, key components of a strong curriculum, and suggestions for working with English language learners.

The Colorado Department of Education's Results Matter Program is pleased to share a [collection of videos](#) (at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/resultsmatter/RMVideoSeries.htm>) that help providers better understand ways to use observation, documentation, and assessment to inform practice. Two styles of videos are provided: 1) practitioners discussing and illustrating their exemplary practices; and 2) clips for practicing observation, documentation, and assessment skills, showing children participating in typical routines and activities. You can watch the videos online or download the free clips for use in educational and professional development activities.

GRANTS and FUNDING

CHILD CARE STIMULUS FUNDS AND GUIDANCE AVAILABLE- Last week, the Administration (NOTE: what administration? Federal government?) released \$2 billion (including \$255 million for quality efforts) for the Child Care & Development Block Grant under the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (stimulus), along with guidance on the language prohibiting states from using these funds to supplant state general revenue funds for child care assistance to low-income families. You can read the guidance and see how the funds are allocated at www.naeyc.org/policy/arra/CCDBG.asp

The Big Green Help Grant - The Green Grant application will go live on Earth Day, April 22nd.
<http://www.bghevent.com/grant/index.htm>

Target Early Childhood Reading - <http://sites.target.com/site/en/company/page.jsp?contentId=WCMP04-031821> - Reading grants are awarded to schools, libraries, and nonprofit organizations, supporting programs such as weekend book clubs and after-school reading programs that foster a love of reading and encourage children from birth through age 9 to read together with their families. Deadline: May 31.

NATURE RELATED

The Big Green Help is a global kid-led initiative that provides information and tools to help explain climate change to kids, and educates and empowers kids to make a difference by connecting them to earth-friendly activities in their everyday lives. Go to <http://www.biggreenhelp.com/#>

Bird Call Juke Box from Green Hour – Green Hour loaded up their sound player with the songs and calls of common birds. Hear the calls and songs of a dozen common birds in our Bird-Call Jukebox. Go to <http://www.greenhour.org/content/activity/detail/6921#make>

FAMILIES

Kids off the Couch - Kids off the Couch.com offers a free, weekly e-blast that takes what kids love -- good films, books, music, and digital media -- and uses it to inspire family adventures. From art and architecture, to nature and sporting events, they connect families to each other and to the world.

<http://www.kidsoffthecouch.com/>

HEALTH

Prepare your Family for Pool Safety – *Safe Kids USA* presents family pool safety information starting with “5 truths about children who drown.” Learn about pool safety at

http://www.usa.safekids.org/tier3_cd_2c.cfm?content_item_id=26931&folder_id=301

Visit the Better Kid Care Web Site for Additional Resources

www.betterkidcare.psu.edu

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 email your questions to mail 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: [mail to:BetterKidCareNews-subscribe-request@lists.psu.edu](mailto:BetterKidCareNews-subscribe-request@lists.psu.edu).

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

Reflections...

We would love to hear from you! **Email 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.
