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# FRONTLINE

## July/August 2009



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## Still A Good Place to Start: Earning a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential

The dream of many individuals who love children is to have a child development center or family child care home of their own. This is no easy task, as those who have worked to follow that dream have come to know. But, like with most dreams or goals in life, none must have a plan, then work with passion and purpose toward achievement. A good place to start is by ensuring that you are qualified as a child care provider. Even though the requirements for Teachers and Teacher Assistants are moving into the realm of possessing credentials from institutions of higher education and learning, or an Associates, Bachelors, or Masters degree, the **Council for Professional Recognition** continues to administer the Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential which has served to qualify early childhood professionals since the early 1970s. The CDA Credential is still in great demand. According to the Council's website, nearly 15,000 child care providers apply annually. The CDA program is designed to assess and credential early childhood care and education professionals based on performance. **(Continued on page 4)**

### Thoughts on Leadership

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We at WCDC have always believed that our actions and service to the early childhood community has been a demonstration of leadership.

ōf your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.ō  
-John Quincy Adams, 6th President of the United States of America

Julia Castillo,  
Executive Director

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## PDCQI Seminar on Things to Know About Leadership and Management

Out of the ten (10) standards listed in the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria, **Leadership & Management** is listed as standard number 10. It deals with program and fiscal management, and includes effective policies, procedures, and systems that support staff and personnel in delivering high quality education and services to children and their families.



On July 17, 2009 the leaders from the child care centers participating in the **Professional Development and Continuous Quality Improvement (PDCQI)** project came together for a seminar and networking opportunity to discuss common issues and challenges, as well as to develop solutions in meeting the criteria listed in Standard #10. Ms. Marica Cox, Supervisor of the District of Columbia OSSE/OECE Professional Development Unit served as the Keynote Speaker of the day. She delivered a highly informative presentation with a focus on **"Teacher Quality."** In each ECE program, teaching staff make up the largest number of personnel and the biggest budget item. They are on the **"FRONTLINE"** in determining whether our children receive quality daily educational experiences. Ms. Cox wanted the group to know that we must reward excellent teachers and link our assessment of them to clear and measurable child outcomes and quality indicators. The Professional Development Unit remains committed to creating programs and opportunities that promote this workforce. Dr. Edna Ranck, Project Director, and the PDCQI staff facilitated four (4) workgroups on: Human Resource Management, Program Management, Regulatory & Fiscal Issues.

**(Continued on page 4)**

## During the Summer months...Let's keep our children moving...

This article is excerpted from the NAEYC publication, *Young Children*, July 2008, pages 60-61

### Learning By Leaps and Bounds: Why Motor Skills Matter Practical Ideas for Teachers By Rae Pica

*"I've already got so much to do...now I have to worry about motor skills, too!"*

Those of us who work to make movement a bigger part of children's lives and education have heard similar comments out loud for years. They're not surprising given our society's false notion that the mind and body are separate and the functions of the mind are superior to those of the body.

I'm delighted by all the research pointing to the body's role in cognitive development, but, as a children's physical activity specialist, I feel strongly that the body matters too. Physical development and physical fitness deserve equal respect and attention! As such, I've chosen to focus this my first *Young Children* column, on the role of teachers in helping young children learn motor skills.

Many people believe children automatically acquire and perfect motor skills, such as running, jumping, and throwing, as their bodies develop. That it's a natural process that occurs along with physical maturation. It is true that one day the infant rolls over by herself, eventually starts to crawl, and then suddenly rises up onto hands and knees and begins creeping. Sometime around the first birthday, with only a little assistance and a lot of enthusiastic encouragement from adults, she takes her first steps. And then it seems, almost before you know it, she's off and running!

But maturation takes care of only part of the process—the part that allows a child to execute most movement skills at an immature or beginning level. At this level something about the child's form or technique in performing a physical skill isn't fully developed. This can happen even with such basic motor skills as walking and running. (If you've ever observed a child who hasn't quite mastered the ability to move his limbs in perfect opposition {right arm and left leg, left arm and right leg} or whose feet roll in, pinky toes lifting off the ground, you know this is true.) When children don't get the help they need to learn physical skills, many never fully master gross (large muscle) motor skills.

The ability to perform gross motor skills is related directly to physical fitness. A competent mover will gladly keep moving; he or she will engage in such activities as dancing, jumping rope, and hanging and swinging on the playground equipment. A child who feels physically awkward and uncoordinated is going to avoid movement. Such a child isn't likely to take part in an after-school game of tag or to climb the monkey bars during recess. Since poor movement habits tend to remain from childhood to adulthood, a physically inactive child is

likely to grow up to be an inactive adult. Considering the health hazards for the unfit—obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and other risks—teaching children motor skills is indeed just as important as teaching language skills.

#### To Do More

The most important thing you can do is give children the time, space, and opportunity to move. It's also critical to observe closely. Based on what you know about motor skills, are you seeing anything that requires attention? For example, does a child land properly from a jump, with her heels coming all the way down and knees bent? If not, you'd want to work with her to master the correct movements. It can be a simple matter of demonstrating the proper technique or of offering a few simple words of encouragement. For instance, if a child is landing straight legs, you could simply suggest she make her legs *bendy* when she lands. If she is landing on her toes only, tickle her heels so she feels the part of the foot and then ask her to make sure that part touches the floor when she comes down.

Fortunately, serious motor control problems are fairly rare. But motor skill delays, unlike language delays, can be difficult to detect, and they will not simply disappear on their own. If a child is a bit awkward and uncoordinated in his movements in comparison to others his age, it could be due to slight motor delays or to limited opportunities for active play. The child may just be clumsy, a trait that can be inherited. Similarly, what you assume to be a problem may be due to lack of maturity rather than poor motor coordination. For example, if a preschooler regularly drops a ball when you toss it to her, you shouldn't rush to the conclusion that she is experiencing delays. Catching a ball is a skill many preschoolers are still learning. Books like, *Experiences in Movement* include information on milestones in motor development, which can help you know what to expect at certain stages.

If you suspect a child has a problem with certain skills, the first thing to do is ensure he gets more practice. For instance, if he's having trouble with alternating movements, like climbing or descending stairs, play games with repetitive movement patterns, like hopscotch. If he's always walking on tiptoe, play a game in which you walk on heels only. If a problem persists...speak with the child's parents about consulting a pediatrician, occupational therapist or physical therapist for an evaluation.

...Familiarize yourself with both the importance of and the fundamentals of motor skills. You don't have to be a motor development specialist or study movement to help children build motor skills.

### DC Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Services:

The Washington Child Development Council (WCDC) operates the District of Columbia's Child Care Resource and Referral Service (CCR&R). WCDC provides computerized data on all licensed child care homes and facilities in the District. **The District of Columbia OSSE/Office of Early Childhood Education (OECE) has requested that each provider take an accurate account of the current vacant slots at your facility.**

**Continue to keep the database up-to-date!**

You can contact Tricialand Hillard, Database Manager, at (202) 387-0002 to make sure that the information about your program is most accurate.

Thank you !

### List of PDCQI Centers and Family Child Care Homes, July 10, 2009

Centers Consultants: Patricia McFadden, Cynthia Davenport, and Debra Byrd

- \*Associates for Renewal in Education (ARE) CIL & Dunbar
- \*Armstrong Preparatory Centers. 1 & 2
- \*Bell Teen Parent & CDC
- \*Bennett Babies 1 & 2
- \*Bright Beginnings
- \*Children's Hut
- \*Community 1 & 2
- \*Eagle
- \*First Rock Baptist Church
- \*Full Gospel Tabernacle
- \*Goldies 2
- \*Home Away from Home
- \*Ideal
- \*Israel Baptist Church
- \*Kids Are Us
- \*Kiddies Kollege Nursery & Preschool
- \*Kids' Corner
- \*Love and Care 1 & 2
- \*Loving Care
- \*Martha's Table 1 & 2
- \*Milestones Enrichment Center
- \*New Community
- \*Quickie Becky's
- \*Saint Phillips

Family Child Care Homes Consultant:  
Ms. Fannie Mae Cousins

- \*Rachel Ford
- \*Marlene Hudson
- \*Elvera Patrick
- \*Patricia Reeves
- \*Mamie Mewborn
- \*Deborah Price
- \*Lorraine Wooten

**Ensure your end-of-year transition planning includes completing tasks associated with NAEYC & NAFCC accreditation!**

## Coming Events!

\*Community Relationships\*  
- Places to Visit -

**Summer Vacation at the Great Wolf Lodge Family Resort & Water Park**  
**Great Family Fun!**  
549 East Rochambeau Drive  
Williamsburg, VA 23188  
1-866-213-1123

**WolfTrap Children's Theatre in the Woods**  
Vienna, VA.

Tickets required for children 3 and up  
**\$5.00 for one show/\$8.00 for two shows same day!**  
Go to: [www.wolf-trap.org](http://www.wolf-trap.org) for info and schedule.

**DC OSSE, Wellness & Nutrition Services**  
**DC TEAM NUTRITION TRAINING- CYCLE V**  
August 24 through September 14, 2009

Registration closes 8/14/09

\*Contact Dr. Dawanna James-Holly at [dawanna.james-holly@dc.gov](mailto:dawanna.james-holly@dc.gov)

**Save the Date!**  
National Book Festival  
September 26, 2009  
National Mall  
Free and Open to the Public!



For PDCQI Centers and Family Child Care Home Providers:

oA Round Robin of Learning  
Saturday, August 8, 2009  
8:00am to 3:30pm (6 clock hours)  
\*\*\*\*LEARNING ACTIVITIES\*\*\*\*

What you can do with unit blocks, manipulative materials, and table games. Make & take books, discover planting, and treasures from trash. Make learning FUN! Special session on "Getting ready for accreditation for FCC Homes." **PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED!**

The Council describes the CDA as those persons who are able to meet the specific needs of children and work with parents and others to nurture children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth. A CDA performs according to the CDA Competency Goals and Functional Areas. These include everything from establishing and maintaining a safe and healthy learning environment to maintaining a commitment to professionalism.

The steps to obtain a CDA include: Determining eligibility, Meeting training requirements, Purchasing an application packet, Completing assessment requirements, or a \*CDA Professional Preparation Program (P3). The CDA Credential is awarded for three (3) child care settings and various endorsements: The Center-based Credential for which Candidates receive endorsements to work with preschool children, or with infants and toddlers; the Family Child Care Credential; and the Home Visitor Credential. Bilingual endorsements are available for all the settings. The process requires a sustained commitment to understanding the goals and functional areas, working to achieve experience in a particular setting, and the willingness to be evaluated on the CDA Competency Standards.

If you have a high school diploma or GED, or a degree in a field not related to ECE, then the CDA Credential is still a good place to start your career as an early care & education professional!

*For more information, please visit the Council for Professional Recognition website at: [www.cdacouncil.org](http://www.cdacouncil.org).  
The Council can be reached via telephone at : 800-424-4310 or (202) 265-9090.*

## DID YOU KNOW? WHAT OECE DOES...

The *DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), Office of Early Childhood Education (OECE)* provides leadership and coordination to ensure that all District of Columbia children from birth to kindergarten entrance have access to high quality early childhood development programs.

OECE works to develop an effective early childhood education system by:

- \*Implementing high standards for programs and professionals
- \*Creating supports to meet standards
- \*Adhering to rigorous accountability measures
- \*Engaging community stakeholders
- \*Securing strong financial supports

The Professional Development Unit (in the Office of Early Childhood Education) is responsible for providing resources that strengthen the knowledge, skills and disposition of the early childhood workforce. In doing so, this unit supports and partners with community and government agencies.

The Professional Development Unit also provides guidance on policies related to early childhood workforce development, credentialing and qualifications.

Questions or comments can be referred to:

Marica Cox, Supervisor, Professional Development Unit  
(202) 727-8148  
[Marica.cox@dc.gov](mailto:Marica.cox@dc.gov)

## Leadership & Management (cont'd)

Each participant contributed ideas that served to spark further discussion. The groups shared these ideas during a Reporting period. The seminar concluded with the viewing of a CD-ROM entitled, "*Children Come First.*" It served to remind the Directors and Owners that quality programming comes at a great cost. If we truly value young children and their families, then we must make a variety of investments. Professional development planning with staff, purchasing quality equipment & materials to facilitate a relationship with our learning environment (indoors & outdoors), the continuous evaluation of what is working well and what isn't; and the fortitude to seek resources and make necessary changes were examples of these investments. In a question & answer period, Directors & Owners stated they are looking for more support for their programs from government and community partners. These supports include: resources, finances, and parent engagement.

### Quotes from the Seminar:

- o Leadership is an action word. o
- o Recognize leadership at all levels in your center or program. o
- o A humble leader is not self-effacing, but tries to elevate everyone. o