

NURTURING NOTES



the
Nurturing Center

**... from our house
to yours**

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES, SUSTAINING COMMUNITIES

The Nurturing Center
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The Nurturing Center's mission statement and goals are, "to provide supportive, respectful services that strengthen families, increasing the number of children raised in healthy, nurturing environments" and, "to implement a highly coordinated continuum of support and services to families and to address the need for and acknowledge the importance of quality, accessible, affordable child care."



By Eileen Donohoue, Executive Director

People Sense

Have you noticed that children pick up on our nonverbal cues very quickly? Children zero in on what is going on with their caregiver instinctively, sensing approval, interest, worry or excitement. Non verbal signals are sent through facial gestures, eye movement, tone of voice, position of the head, hand or other body movements. This kind of communication is at the root of building and maintaining our relationships.

Even our youngest children have a tremendous ability to focus on and interpret people's intentions. Studies done at Yale University demonstrate that babies can tell the difference between people who are helpful and those who are not and they routinely show a preference for helpful people.

Day to day it is important for us to notice and respond to the nonverbal cues of each of the children in care. This "attunement" is vital for being able to respond appropriately to a child's internal rhythms and needs. A child's ability to listen and learn is much greater when they are calm and contented than when they are tired, afraid or sad. When a child's nonverbal signals are not recognized and responded to their actions may seem disruptive and difficult. As adults, we can become more adept at this foundational human language. Start by choosing to be very conscious that as a caregiver your words, actions and expressions take on enormous proportion for children. Work hard not to crush a child and be confident that your praise and approval is motivating and powerful. Develop your observational skills and make a note of each child's style of engagement, are they shy and timid, preferring to play solo or more social, preferring group play? What types of things indicate changes in each child's rhythm? A tone of voice or intensity of play may be important cues. Is the child quiet when he or she is upset? What are the individual strengths and vulnerabilities of each child? Perhaps one child becomes easily overwhelmed and another can absorb a lot of commotion?

While children have some natural hard wiring we can also do a lot to help them become more sensitive and aware of their own rhythms and develop deeper social skills. Discuss feelings with your children and what various feelings "look like". Teach and model good listening skills. Help each child discover their strengths and interests and respect other children's areas of strength. Other skills include sharing, taking turns, and self control. Point out your own or others positive behavior so that children notice. And of course, be sure to praise children often!

Whether we are adults or children good social skills or "people sense" help our lives and relationships go more smoothly! Helping young children learn good social skills will help them succeed in school and later in life!

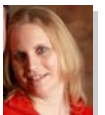


By Rhonda Miller, Child Care Resource & Referral Specialist

Resource & Referral News

Please welcome newest staff member Melissa Fenger. Melissa will be providing child care referrals for families, keeping provider files updated and will also be doing some TANF child care management. We are very excited to have her on board.

Melissa is working hard inputting your Market Rate Survey results as you all submit them to us. Additionally, she is checking your provider files and is finding several out of date files. Remember, we cannot pay for state paid families if your file is out of date. She will send a letter to you if she finds your file is not current, but you might give her a call and inquire about your file before we can't pay your invoice or invoices.



Last, please know that at this time we have not heard whether or not rates will change as a result of the Market Rate Survey. We will notify you as soon as we know!



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Birth to 3: The time that matters most.

"Thanks to the Nurturing Center, I was able to find high-quality day care for my son. Now we both have smiles on our faces. Thanks, Nurturing Center, for making this possible."



SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

for Montana Shares, a partnership of Montana-based nonprofit groups dedicated to improving the quality of life in communities throughout the state. Enter to win a raffle of 13 fabulous prize packages, including 10 great getaways.

Suggested donation

\$10 per ticket, or 3 tickets for \$25.

To enter the Montana Shares raffle, enter your information and return your tickets, along with any donation to:

Montana Shares
PO Box 883
Helena, MT 59624
(406) 442-2218
(800) 823-2625
shares@montanashares.org

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

E-mail _____

Credit donation to: _____ MTCRRN (member group)

Professional Development News....



By Sherrie Smith, Early Childhood Coordinator

Hello Again and Happy Summer!

Hard to believe we are on to another season and it is time for another newsletter....hope the beginning of July finds you well and getting some outdoor time for both you and the kids in between the rain drops...I saw a little girl with some great rain boots the other day!

As this goes out to you I am expecting to hear any day which providers from our region will be participating in the STARS field test. More information on STARS continues to be available and I would encourage all of you to spend some time on the Early Childhood Services webpage familiarizing yourselves with the STARS framework www.childcare.mt.gov - click on Best Beginnings STARS to Quality. And call me if you have trouble navigating the webpage or have questions about the information. As of this writing we are still waiting for details of required classes but we will keep you posted!

I am planning to offer an overview of STARS and CSEFEL (the Social/Emotional framework) in both Lake and Flathead counties this summer so I hope many of you can join me for those evenings...7/22 in Kalispell and 8/19 in Polson...check the calendar for details. www.nurturingcenter.org

Information on Professional Development Incentive Awards (Merit Pay and Higher Ed Merit Pay) is now on the Early Childhood Project website www.mtecp.org so check it out...click on What's New...deadlines are July 30th for Higher Ed for Fall Semester and August 20th for Merit Pay I. You must be ACTIVE on the Practitioner Registry at the time of your application.

The 60 hour Infant Toddler class will run September – mid December. If you work with infants and toddlers and have not yet taken this class give me a call and I will tell you more about the format and financial assistance...it is a great class! And...the comparable 60 hour Preschool class will be available this next year so think about if you might like to take it and stay tuned for more info!

Summer in the Flathead is a time when we want to enjoy the outdoors as much as possible...here is a link to an online article on 10 ideas for outdoor learning centers... have fun with the ideas. Looking forward to seeing and meeting more of you this summer! <http://www.examiner.com/x-15855-Early-Childhood-Educational-Activities-Examiner~y2010m3d21-Back-yard-learning-centers-10-ideas-for-outdoor-classrooms>



We would like to welcome Colleen Downing as our new CACFP Program Manager. Colleen has been with the Nurturing Center for over 3 years and most recently worked in our Resource & Referral department. To contact Colleen, call 756-1414 or e-mail colleen@nurturingcenter.org.

Helping the Choosey Eater

From Colleen Downing, Child & Adult Care Food Program Manager

- ◆ Remember your job as the parent is to **provide** nutritious meals and snacks. The child's job is to decide how much they eat. Forcing a child to eat only makes matters worse and continues to make eating a battle.
- ◆ Make eating and new foods fun. It's OK to play with your food if it gets children touching, maybe even putting a little their mouths. Don't throw table manners out the window--just remember that everything is new and they need to explore.
- ◆ Have a sampling party with a new food being offered. Try using an ice cube tray filled with different foods.
- ◆ Serve it on a different dish, if age appropriate, serve with colored toothpicks. You can even use the child's plastic dishware for a fun change.
- ◆ Cut up food. You can use cookie cutters or even try cutting waffles into waffle sticks, or carrot wheels.
- ◆ Try offering a new food along with a trusted favorite.
- ◆ Encourage, but don't force, the "one-bite rule" asking children to try one bite of a new food.
- ◆ Never use food as a reward or punishment. This makes a child feel shameful or puts too much emphasis on eating and finishing their plate. Children will naturally listen to their cues that they are full. It's normal for children to eat a lot one day and then barely eat anything the next.
- ◆ Have a positive attitude yourself about new foods. Children mimic the attitudes and behaviors of the adults around them.
- ◆ Children may need to see a food up to 15 times before they will actually try it! Don't give up! You may need to vary the shape or temperature of the food. Since chewing can still be difficult for children, raw veggies are often turned away. This doesn't mean that the child doesn't like the veggies, it could just mean that they are too hard to chew.

Visit Montana Shares online to learn more and print more ticket sheets:
montanashares.org



Summer time is upon us ...

From Child Care Licensing

Summer time is upon us and with that comes a few reminders for safe summer time activities for children attending child care facilities. During these fun activities, on site at the facility and off site, supervision is key. A child care facility is responsible for maintaining ratios at all times, and per ARM 37.95.172(1), children must be supervised at all times.

During Montana's summer months, when the temperature is warmer and more conducive to outings, more facilities choose to take children on field trips. While field trips can be developmentally appropriate and exciting for the children, caregivers are tasked with maintaining the health and safety of the children on these outings. If a facility chooses to transport children in a vehicle, written permission must be obtained from the parents, and children must be in appropriate car seats or booster seats. ARM 37.95.132(8a) states "All vehicles shall be equipped with children's car seats or booster seats that meet federal Department of Transportation recommendations for the age and weight of the child being transported." Remember the 6 and 60 rule – children under six years of age, or six years of age but weighing less than 60 pounds are required to be in the appropriate car seat or booster seat. In addition, a copy of the emergency consent form must always be taken when the children are off site from the facility.

Warmer temperatures also lead to water activities for children; these activities may take place at the facility with a wading pool, a sprinkler or at a local swimming pool. Wading pools may be utilized in a child care setting however certain regulations must be followed. For definition purposes, a wading pool is less than 24 inches high. When children are using the wading pool, an approved caregiver must be present and supervising, and the pool must be emptied and sanitized after each day's use. Licensing is observing that less and less facilities are utilizing wading pools and instead are allowing children to run through sprinklers. If a local swimming pool is used, a life guard must be present, however, is not counted in ratios. ARM 37.95.127(8) states "The child-staff ratio shall be maintained whenever children participate in swimming activities, including swimming instruction."

Lastly, day care providers are responsible for keeping children safe from the sun. ARM 37.95.1015(1) states "Children shall be protected from draft and prolonged exposure to direct sunlight. With the parent's permission, sun screen shall be applied to children over 6 months old when outdoor conditions dictate." Parents must fill out and sign the Over the Counter (OTC) Medication Authorization Form every year, and parents are responsible for bringing the child's sunscreen on site to the facility, unless other arrangements are made. Be familiar with each child's brand of sunscreen and how often the sunscreen may need to be reapplied. If you have any questions on the above subjects/regulations, or other summer time issues, please contact your local licensor.

Letter to Day Care Providers and Parents/Guardians of children in daycare

From Flathead Health Department

Many parent/guardians obtain health care for their children during the summer months.

Here is some important information.

Well Child Visits:

A child should be seen by a health care provider when he or she is **not** sick. Well child visits can include physical measurements, patient history, sensory screenings, behavioral assessments, and planned procedures (immunizations, screenings and other tests). The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends well child visits at these times:

Before 1 st birthday (6 visits):	3-5 days, and at 1, 2, 4, 6, and 9 months of age
1 st birthday to 2 nd birthday (3 visits):	at 12, 15, 18 months of age
2 nd birthday to 3 rd birthday (2 visits):	at 24 and 30 months of age
3 rd birthday and older:	every year

<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/health-management/pages/Well-Child-Care-A-Check-Up-for-Success.aspx>

Immunizations:

Most children can receive their required school entry immunizations **on or after their 4th birthday**. This means that parents do not have to wait until the week before school to obtain these vaccines. The Health Department encourages parents to take children to their health care provider or the Health Department early. When a child receives vaccines in a more relaxed situation, it can help to reduce anxiety.

Immunization Records:

Be sure to give updated immunization records to your day care provider and school.

Health Insurance (Health Montana Kids formerly Medicaid and CHIP):

Montana increased income guidelines for Healthy Montana Kids and Healthy Montana Kids Plus. This insurance can help to pay for well child visits and immunizations.

Information is available at <http://hmk.mt.gov/>. Call Susan Gosney at 751-8224 if you have questions.

Vaccines:

PCV13 (pneumococcal conjugate vaccine)

This vaccine changed to include more types of the bacteria that cause illness. The new formulation is called PCV13. The earlier formulation was PCV7. Many children completed the 4 dose schedule of PCV7. These children, who are still under 5 years old, should receive a dose of PCV13. Children with an underlying health condition, who are not yet 6 years old, should also receive a dose PCV13.

Chickenpox:

Chickenpox vaccine is required for daycare attendance. It is not a requirement for school entry in Montana. The Health Department strongly urges parents to vaccinate children with the 2nd recommended dose, usually given at 4-6 years of age, when children receive their other required and recommended vaccines.

Questions: If you have questions or need information, call the Health Department at 751-8110 or visit our webpage at www.flatheadhealth.org



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We're on the Web!
www.nurturingcenter.org



Click on this link to download our current
Professional Development Calendar
<http://www.nurturingcenter.org/nurturing-center-programs-services-training.html>

The Nurturing Center is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to providing services to strengthen families and support early care and education in Flathead, Lake, Lincoln and Sanders Counties.



Front row: Colleen Downing, Eileen Donohoue, Sherrie Smith, Rhonda Miller, Gayle Parker, Kathleen White, Jennifer Khoury
Back row: Shannon Johnson, Joleen Ogle, Jennifer Rogge, Michelle Wheat

“Friendly Reminder from CACFP Food Program”

Now that we are in full swing of summer please don't forget to call Colleen or Natalie at The Nurturing Center if you are going to be gone for the day. This is especially important when we are going to make a visit and no one is home and we have not been called or been informed that you will be out. So a friendly phone call from you would be greatly appreciated. Thanks!