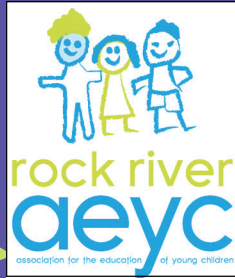


**Rock River
Association for
the Education of
Young Children**



RRAEYC NEWS

Issue 2

May 2008

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Jane Erikson congratulates Linda Runkle, winner of a RRAEYC membership door prize at the RRAEYC Spring Conference at Highland Community College in Freeport.

2008 Newsletter editions will be disseminated in February, May and September. Special flyers will be mailed throughout the year.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE By Jane Erikson

Who? What? Why?

This issue of the newsletter gives us an opportunity to highlight an exciting local coalition that has existed since 2003 and impacts early care and education in the Rockford area.

WHO?

The **Rockford Early Learning Council**, renamed **Rockford Early Learning Council of the Rockford Area**, was organized in 2003 by Mayor Doug Scott. Community representatives were invited who shared an interest in families, children and early learning. In 2005, the group published the report Early Childhood Education in Rockford: Building on a Foundation of Success and the Executive Summary and made them available throughout the Rockford area. The group eventually formed a Board of Directors and by-laws, enabling them to apply for and receive funding from a federal

Early Learning Opportunities Act literacy grant in Nov. 2006 for \$900,000, covering a period of 17 months.

The grant focused on four goals:

1. Increasing children's access to quality literacy materials;
2. Increasing early language and literacy skills among children in early learning programs;
3. Decreasing behavior problems in early learning programs and strengthening support of children's social and emotional development;
4. Designing a common data system among providers of early learning services.

WHAT?

This month the Council celebrated their fifth year as an organization and will welcome a new board of directors. I want to give the former board a big thanks for their dedication and

long hours of commitment. They are Judy Johnson/President, Diane Stout/Vice Pres., Margaret Hallin/Secretary and Becky Kendall Cook/Treasurer.

In May 2008, a request for funding will be submitted to Grand Victoria for an Infant/Toddler initiative. Contact Jane Erikson at 815/398-1600 for information on membership.

WHY?

A lot of ground work has been laid and many things are happening in the best interest of children. This group made a difference and will continue to serve as advocates in our community. Currently, the council is seeking funds to support a web site and is always looking for grants and financial support so they may carry on as a clearinghouse in the Rockford area to strengthen programming for our youth.

Child Care Provider Recognition Banquet

YWCA Child Care Solutions and RRAEYC showed their appreciation for the hard work invested by the early childhood providers in a four-county area. The recognition event was held on April 15 at the Radisson Hotel in Rockford where approximately 200 guests

attended. Many were recognized for participation in furthering their professional development in the early childhood field. Guest speaker author Mary Kay Morrison emphasized the importance of using humor to enhance the learning development of children.

All attendees received a goody bag filled with resource materials and promotional items. The evening was topped off by the distribution of many door prizes generously donated by local businesses.
-Clara Recknagel and Danita Lewis/YWCA CCS

“.com” Internet Resources

This section of the newsletter provides readers with a list of resources relevant to young children, families, and educators. The RRAEYC Board is interested in your suggestions of innovative sites that you have found on the internet. Email suggestions to Kara Gallup at karagallup@msn.com.

- “Learn the Signs. Act Early” is a campaign of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to educate teachers and families about when a child should reach milestones in how he or she plays, learns, speaks and acts. The CDC offers free Child Care Provider Resource Kits in English and

Spanish. Order your kit at www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/actearly or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.

- The University of Minnesota: Center for Early Education and Development has TIP sheets available on topics of Social & Emotional Growth, Challenging Behaviors and Mental Health. You can download a printable copy and resources include information on Infants & Toddlers. www.cehd.umn.edu/ceed
- Participants at the Spring Conference went ‘wild’ for the cinnamon rolls. They were provided by Rhonda Paulson’s Catering in Freeport. To con-

tact Rhonda if you need someone to cater an event, visit their website at www.paulsonscatering.com They did a wonderful job for us at the Conference!

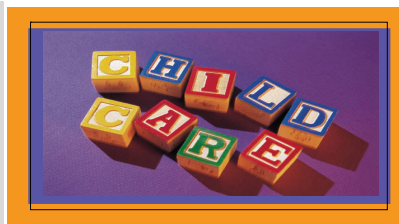
- Mary Kay Morrison spoke at both the Provider Recognition Banquet and the RRAEYC Spring Conference and brightened the day with humor. To find out more about her business, or to contact Mary Kay, check out her website at www.questforhumor.com.



In the Spotlight

One of the most valuable aspects of working with other professionals in the field is the chance to share ideas that work. “In the Spotlight” highlights unique projects, programs or events. It is an opportunity to recognize someone local who has done outstanding work in the field of early childhood.

Submissions will be accepted at any time to karagallup@msn.com.



The Week of the Young Child (WOYC) was celebrated in a special way at the Dakota Learn & Play Child Care Center during the week of April 13—19.

Activities included special guest readers each day, t-shirt painting, breakfast for the parents, and a field trip to tour Casey’s General Store, the only local business. Artwork was sent home with each child for parents to display at their place of employment. In addition, the Center created a window display in honor of WOYC at Casey’s.

-Submitted by Board member Sue Benters

Did you notice our new logo?

RRAEYC heard from our members and the Board weighed in as well...and this newsletter features our new logo developed by Sarah Buob of Yikes! Creative. We really like the look and thank you for your votes. You’ll be seeing more on future mailings and materials developed by the RRAEYC.

RRAEYC also continues to explore ideas for a new website with a look and feel to match our new logo.

Have any suggestions of things you would like to see on our website? Just send suggestions to Kara Gallup at karagallup@msn.com. We’d like to hear from you!

If you would like to reach Sarah Buob, her contact information is:

Yikes! Creative

sarah@yikescreative.com

815.227.0560



How to Avoid Heat Stress in Young Children

☑ The intensity of activities that last 15 minutes or more should be reduced whenever high heat and humidity reach critical levels.

☑ At the beginning of a strenuous exercise program or after traveling to a warmer climate, the intensity and duration of exercise should be limited initially and then gradually increased during a period of 10 to 14 days to accomplish acclimatization to the heat.

☑ Before prolonged physical activity, the child should be well-hydrated. During the activity, periodic drinking should be enforced, for example, each 20 minutes, 5 oz. of cold tap water or a flavored sports drink for a child weighing 90 lbs., and 9 oz. for an adolescent weighing 130 lbs., even if the child

does not feel thirsty.

☞ Taken from American Academy of Pediatrics web site at www.aap.org/advocacy/releases/summertips.cfm

"Practices and Games played in the heat should be shortened and more frequent water breaks should be provided."



HCC Door Prize awarded to Sandy Kortemeier by Melissa Johnson at the RRAEYC Conference.

New RRAEYC Member Attends Conference and Joins the Board

New RRAEYC member, Cheryl Roberson, attended the Early Childhood Spring Conference and then joined the RRAEYC Board for a board meeting and box lunch after the conference. During the meeting, board members asked if she would provide a brief summary of her experience at the conference, from the perspective of a new member. Cheryl also was asked to join the board as a representative of Family Child Care

Home Providers. Here is Cheryl's observation on the conference:

"I truly enjoyed the RRAEYC Conference. As a childcare provider, it's sometimes hard to do learning activities with mixed ages. The two classes I attended, *Science for All Seasons* by Nancy Sherwood and *Creative Movement for Early Childhood Education* by Margaret Rennerfeldt, showed me new ideas. One way to incorporate science easily was to take a walk with duct tape

on the bottom of your shoes and then look at what you've found with a magnifying glass. One of the ways to do creative movement can come from reading a book and doing the movement in the book. Overall, the spring conference was a great experience."

-Cheryl Roberson, CDA
Childcare Provider

RRAEYC Early Childhood Spring Conference "Feeling Great in '08" was a 'HOOT'!

On April 5 at the Highland Community College campus, RRAEYC board members held the RRAEYC Early Childhood Spring Conference "Feeling Great in '08". Evaluation remarks from one participant exclaimed, "Welcome back! This conference was a hoot!"

Over 78 participants chose workshops ranging from Creative Movement, Science, Nutrition, Book making, Music, Make-it, Take-it and Child Development.

Mary Kay Morrison led the day

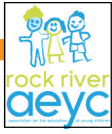
with a keynote focusing on humor and later led a session titled "Got Stress? No Kidding!"

Door prizes were provided from local merchants. RRAEYC donated a free membership and HCC donated two prizes that supported payment for credit hours at HCC.

RRAEYC would like to thank everyone who helped to make this conference a success and we especially thank our participants for joining us on a beautiful spring day to celebrate our profession.



Stacie Geiken accepts HCC Door Prize from Melissa Johnson



RRAEYC

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**JOIN RRAEYC NOW &
AVOID THE RUSH!**



The Environmental Rating Scale—ERS

The Environmental Rating Scale is an observation-based system that incorporates four scales based upon program types and age groups. The 4 scales are:

1. Early Childhood Environment Rating Scales –Revised (ECERS)
2. The Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale—Revised ((ITERS)
3. The Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale—Revised (FCCERS-R) and
4. The School Age Care Environment Rating Scale (SACERS).

While the number of items to observe may seem like quite a bit, it's the average total score that is related to positive child development, not any of the single requirements by themselves. These scales assist the child care provider to meet the 3 basic needs all children have:

- (1) protection of their health and safety,
- (2) building positive relationships, and
- (3) opportunities for stimulation and learning from experience.

These scales factor into a number of state grant programs available to child care providers including the Quality Counts Grant Program and The Quality Rating System. The YWCA Child Care Solutions offers trainings on how to use these 4 scales. Remember, if you have any questions about the ERS, contact Danita Lewis at the YWCA Child Care Solutions at 815.484.9442, Extension 229.



Increasing Physical Activity

Physical activity is an important part of a child's day and was a focus of our RRAEYC Spring Conference. Whether it's running, dancing or tumbling, regular physical activity is an important part of health. The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests:

- ☛ Develop a plan that includes different physical activities throughout the day.
- ☛ Set up a small obstacle course inside or outside; include riding and push toys.
- ☛ Physical activities should be tailored to the developmental and physical needs and limitations of children.
- ☛ Children with chronic health conditions and disabilities should be included in appropriate activities, with modifications if necessary.

www.healthychildcare.org