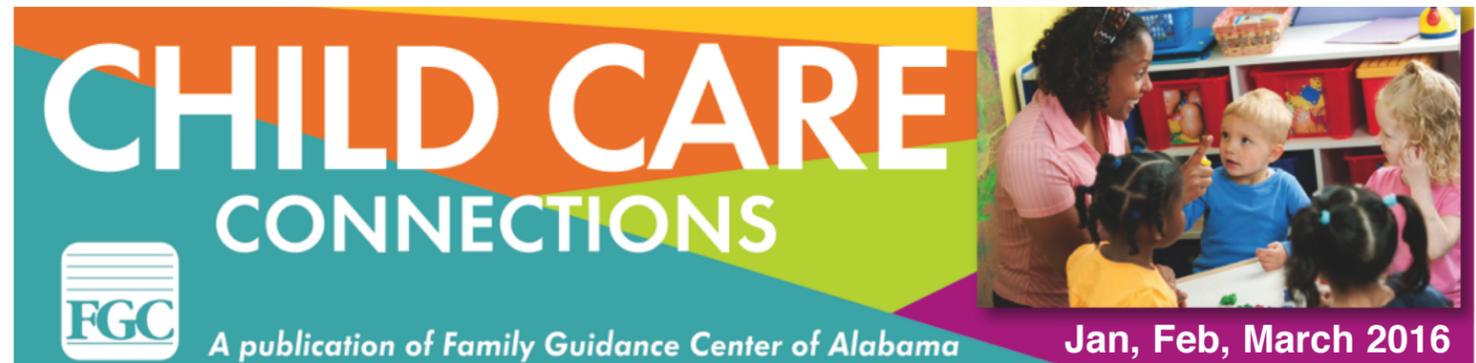




Family Guidance Center of Alabama
2358 Fairlane Drive
Montgomery, Alabama 36116

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January, February, March Newsletter/Calendar 2016

Save the Dates Sensational Saturday 2016



Mark your calendar for these exciting events in both the Dothan and Montgomery locations!

Week of the Young Child - Teacher Training and Children's Events Dothan

Teacher Training - April 11, 2016
Children's Event - April 12, 2016

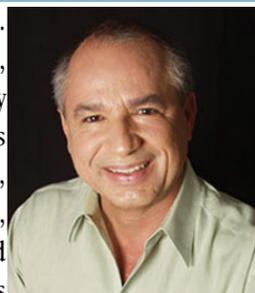
Montgomery

Teacher Training - April 12, 2016
Children's Events - April 13, 2016

Supporting Children with Special Needs Conference - Montgomery May 21, 2016

Opening Doors for Children with Special Needs Conference - Dothan August 2016

Family Guidance Center is excited to announce that Dr. Luis Hernandez, Early Childhood Education Specialist, will be the guest speaker for our Sensational Saturday Child Care Conferences this year. Dr. Hernandez brings solid expertise based on his work history in Head Start, child care, Pre K programs, college and universities, child care resource and referral administration, and professional development design. His expertise includes early literacy, dual language learning, adult learning practices, changing demographics and diversity, and ECE management and leadership topics. As a regular presenter and keynote speaker at national, state, and local conferences, Luis is highly regarded for his motivational and energizing presentations.



Sensational Saturday Child Care Conference - Dothan Saturday, January 30th at Wallace Community College - Cherry Hall Registration/Sign-In begins at 7:30 am

Sensational Saturday Child Care Conference - Montgomery Saturday, March 19th at Auburn Montgomery - Taylor Center Registration/Sign-In begins at 7:00 am

Hope to see you for an energizing Saturday!!!

What is Quality Child Care? Why is it Important?

- High quality care is much more than custodial care; it provides children with meaningful learning and play experiences guided by qualified teachers in an enriched, educational environment.
- Children with access to high quality preschool and child care programs are more likely to acquire the skills needed to enter kindergarten ready to succeed and adapt to new learning and social environments.
- During the first 5 years of a child's life, the majority of the brain's architecture is determined.
- Early childhood experiences set the stage for all future learning.
- For children's programs, quality is paramount to have a positive impact on learning and to provide the economic and financial benefits we expect from our investments.

Quality child care also must meet the basic needs of all children in the child care setting. The safety of children must be the primary focus of child care providers. The child care providers need to protect the health and safety of the children in their care. They also need to provide opportunities for stimulation and learning through developmentally appropriate experiences. Building relationships among children, parents, extended family and communities are also an important aspect of meeting the basic needs of children. All areas are equally important for meeting these basic needs of children.

One way to ensure that the needs of children are being met is to use the Environment Rating Scales as a way to evaluate your child care program. These scales are internationally recognized evidence-based quality improvement tools, specifically designed for the classroom environment. They enable programs to

evaluate their environment and provision of care, and to identify clear steps for moving forward to enhance quality. The Environment Rating Scales provide a detailed and objective snapshot on the day of practice within a setting, using a range of indicators.

What do the ER Scales Predict? Children in higher quality settings are found to have better school success in the following areas:

- Language ability
- Pre-academic skills (math and reading readiness)
- Attitudes toward teachers and perceptions of their own competence
- Relationships with caregivers and teachers
- Social skills

What are the Types of Environment Rating Scales?

The *Infant-Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS-R)*, is designed to assess group programs for children birth to 2 1/2 years. The *Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-R)* is used to assess programs for children 2 1/2 through 5 years of age.

The third rating scale is the *Program Administration Scale (PAS)*. This rating scale provides directors with an administrative rating scale format to achieve and maintain a high quality child care program.

Please check the training calendar for your area on classes on the Environment Rating Scales. There are copies of the ITERS-R, ECERS-R and PAS rating scales available for checkout in the Resource Libraries in both Dothan and Montgomery.

A Day for Directors

On Saturday, January 30, 2016, the Child Care Education and Training Department will be hosting a Director's Conference in Montgomery from 7:30 am to 2:00 pm. Our guest speaker for the conference will be Andrea McCain.

Andrea McCain serves as the Vice President of Human Resources for the Central Alabama Area of Regions Bank. She joined Regions in 2003. McCain holds a Bachelor's degree in Human Resources Management from Auburn University. She has a Master's degree in Human Resources Management from Troy University in Montgomery. McCain has a Senior Professional in Human Resources Certification from the Human Resources Certification Institute, Washington DC. She serves as a board member for the Montgomery Symphony Orchestra, Family Sunshine Center, and Montgomery Public School's Business and Finance Academy.



Below will be the schedule for the day

7:30am - 8:30am	Registration/Visit Vendors
8:30am - 10:30am	Human Resources Update Andrea McCain, SPHR Regions Bank Vice President - Human Resources Manager Central Alabama Area
10:30am - 11:00am	Vendors
11:00am - 11:45pm	Lunch provided by Lakeshore Learning Materials/ Visit Vendors
11:45pm - 1:45pm	Personnel Management
1:45pm - 2:00pm	Evaluations/door prizes/announcements

The Director's Conference is for Directors, Assistant Directors and/or Owners of center-based child care. Must be registered to attend. Please call the Montgomery Child Care Education and Training Program at 334-270-4100 ext. 235 to register.



ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES Department of Education, and Family Guidance Center of Alabama, will be offered online again this quarter.

- It is a **FREE 7 week online course that begins on January 20, 2016.**
- **You must complete entire course in order to get your credential at the end.**
- **If you have taken the class online or Face to Face before and received a credential, you cannot take this. It can only be completed once.**
- **You MUST have a working e-mail address and access to the internet to be able to take this course. If you are taking this course with a co-worker you will each need to have separate email addresses.**

The Alabama Early Learning Guidelines were developed by DHR to promote continuity of high quality care and learning for young children ages 0-5. The AELG online course will consist of training sessions with readings, activities, & online discussions that will be a guide for understanding child development & learning, and for implementing best practices in order to prepare children for success in school and in life. Participants who complete the course will receive 18 workshop training hours and a Training Award Credential issued by the Alabama Department of Human Resources.

REGISTRATION: To REGISTER for the course, contact (Montgomery Training Department 334-270-4100 ext 235 or Dothan Training Department 334-712-7777 ext 227). **Registration deadline is January 11, 2016.**

Infants - Black and White Book

Materials: Black felt, white poster board, glue, hole punch, yarn
Cut simple, basic shapes from black felt. Glue the shapes onto square pieces of poster board. Punch holes in each poster board square. Fasten the squares together with yarn. Hold a baby on your lap and share the book. Point to shapes as you name them for baby.



Toddlers - Stringing Felt Circles

Materials: Colored felt, shoe string, scissors, large button
Cut colored felt into five 4-inch circles. Use scissors to cut a nickel-size hole in the center of each circle. Tie a large button to one end of a shoe string. Show toddlers how to string the felt circles onto the shoe string. The large button on the end of the string will prevent circles from slipping off the string.



Preschoolers - Button Holes

Materials: Colored felt, shoe string, two large, round buttons
Cut felt into ten 4-inch squares. Fold the squares in half; cut a 1-inch slit in the middle of the fold. Unfold the squares to reveal a 2-inch button hole in the middle of the squares. String a large, round button on each end of a shoe string, securing each button with a knot. Show preschoolers how to put the button through the button hole in a square, and slide the square along the string. When all squares are on the string, reverse the process by unbuttoning the squares from the string.

Schoolagers - Felt Puppets

Materials: Felt, shoe string, art supplies
Cut pairs of felt shapes to fit children's hands. Punch holes around the edges of the shapes. Children can lace the shapes together with a shoe string. Provide art supplies for children to decorate the puppets. Schoolagers may want to use the puppets in a puppet show.

Infant Quality Tip
Baby Videos: Helpful or Harmful?

When a baby is born, his brain has about all of the neurons he will ever have. But the job of forming connections between them is still underway. Although watching TV is a passive activity, understanding TV requires certain skills. In the first few years of life, many of these skills are only beginning to develop. To a baby, TV is a stream of 2-dimensional pictures that change about every 6 seconds and have no apparent connection to each other, to the sounds coming from the same direction, or to real people and objects. Until around age 2, studies show that young children can not cognitively comprehend what's being said and retain the information from TV. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children under age 2 do not watch TV, and that older children watch only one to two hours of quality programming per day.



Beginning Saturday, January 9th, the Montgomery Training Department will be offering the Alabama Early Learning Guidelines Course. The Alabama Early Learning Guidelines Course is written to promote continuity of high quality care and learning for children from birth through five years of age.

This course consists of nine training sessions that are a guide for understanding child development and learning, and for implementing best practices in order to prepare children for success in school and in life.

The Alabama Early Learning Guidelines Credential is an important milestone on the Career Lattice of Alabama Child Care and Education Professional Development System - Pathways to Quality Care and Education.

Please see the Montgomery Training Calendar for more information on dates, times and location for the face-to-face AELG Course. Must be registered to attend. Must attend Session 1 in order to attend other sessions.

As Alabama moves steadily towards quality child care, it is vital that we recruit and retain highly qualified child care teachers and home providers. Education and specialized training is an essential component in the equation of quality child care. The CDA program is invaluable in transforming child care providers into child care professionals; but the price tag sometimes prevents providers from applying. T.E.A.C.H Early Childhood Alabama® is a scholarship program designed to make the educational process more affordable. Applications for various T.E.A.C.H scholarships are available from Family Guidance Center Resource staff, or for additional information contact Michelle Raybon at T.E.A.C.H. by calling toll-free 1-866-711-4025.

Online Training Opportunities

Family Guidance Center has once again partnered with ProSolutions Training. Through this partnership you are able to earn a portion of your training hours to meet the DHR requirements through their online courses.



Three easy steps to enroll:

1. **Call and talk to the FGC online training specialist and complete enrollment form**
2. **Verify that you have worked a full year in child care**
3. **Verify that you have taken at least half of your yearly required training hours as face to face classes at FGC**

If you are interested in this training opportunity, please call the Training Department for additional information. For the Dothan area, please call 334-712-7777, ext. 227. For the Montgomery area, please call 334-270-4100 ext. 235. Please ask to speak to the Online Training Specialist, or, if necessary, please leave your name, phone number and a brief message and your call will be returned.

Resource Library Update

Start the New Year off by visiting our Resource Libraries to see the new teacher resource books available for check out! Below is a list of a few new books available.



In the Dothan Resource Library:

- A Survival Guide for Child Care Providers: Tips from the Teachers*
by Karen Levine
- More than Singing: Discovering Music in Preschool and Kindergarten*
by Sally Moomaw
- 125 Brain Games for Babies: Simple Games to Promote Early Brain Development*
by Jackie Silberg

In the Montgomery Resource Library:

- Creating a Beautiful Mess: Ten Essential Play Experiences for a Joyous Childhood*
by Ann Gadzikowski
- Choice Words: How Our Language Affects Children's Learning*
by Peter H. Johnston
- Cooking is Cool: Heat-free Recipes for Kids to Cook*
by Marianne E. Dambra

For more information on our Resource Libraries, please call Christine Gordon in the Dothan area at 1-334-712-7777 ext. 224 and Claire Wallace in the Montgomery area at 1-334-270-4100 ext. 267.

Update for Directors

This quarter, both Dothan and Montgomery locations will be offering special trainings for directors. These trainings are the **Especially for Directors** series and are held for Owners, Directors and Assistant Directors of day care centers.

Especially for Directors - Dothan

Shoot for the Stars: Building Quality through Assessment

Especially for Directors - Montgomery

Understanding Environment Rating Scales - ITERS and ECERS

Please check your local training calendars for the dates, times and locations of these upcoming directors trainings.

DATES OUR OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED

- January 1, 2016 – New Year's Day
- January 18, 2016 – Robert E. Lee/Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- February 15, 2016 – President's Day

Register to Win!

The Training and Education Program at Family Guidance Center's Dothan and Montgomery offices hope that you are utilizing the information that is provided to you each quarter through our Child Care Connections Newsletter. To show our appreciation, we will have a special drawing for some exciting materials to be used with the children in your care. Two winners from the Dothan Region and two winners from the Montgomery Region will be announced at Dothan's Sensational Saturday and Montgomery's Director's Conference on January 30, 2016.

In order to register for this special drawing, you must mention our Child Care Connections Newsletter. The deadline to enter this drawing will be January 27, 2016.

For the Dothan Region

Please contact Brianna Volkman at brianna.volkman@dhr.alabama.gov or call her at 334-712-7777 ext 231.

For the Montgomery Region

Please contact Angela Bailey at angela.bailey@dhr.alabama.gov or call her at 334-270-4100 ext 289.