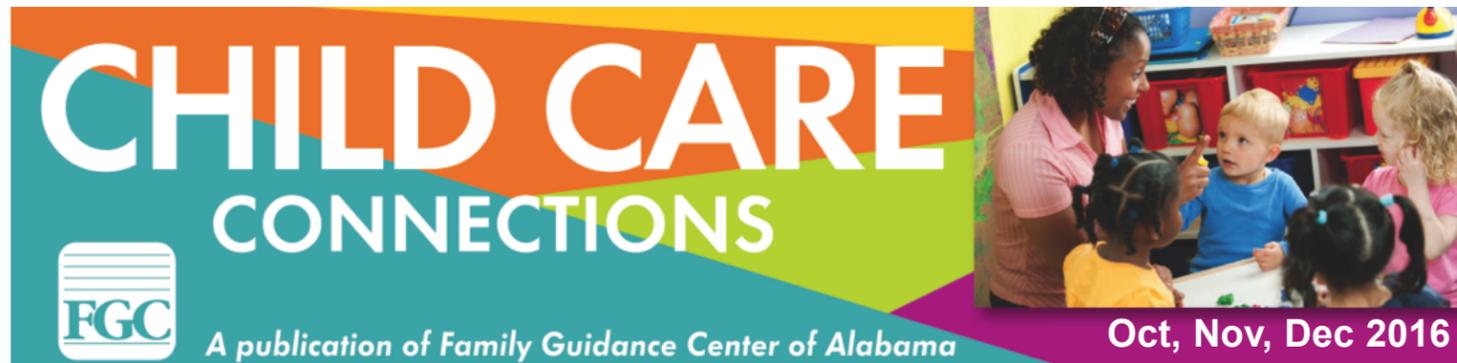




Family Guidance Center of Alabama
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October, November, December Newsletter/Calendar 2016

Save the Dates Sensational Saturday 2017



October 11, 2016 - Art to Heart Orientation (Telecourse)
The Art to Heart is a new distance-learning course offered in partnership with Alabama Public Television and FGC's Child Care Education and Training Program. It is an engaging and fun course that depicts the benefits of using the arts in early childhood education and it consists of 8 episodes over 8 weeks. Participants will receive 12 training hours after completion of the course. The course will be aired on Saturdays from 7:00 to 7:30 am, or it can be viewed online.

Director's Conference - Montgomery
January 21, 2017
Sensational Saturday - Dothan
January 28, 2017
Sensational Saturday - Montgomery
February 25, 2017

Please call your local Training Department for more information!

The Child Care Education and Training Program in Dothan and Montgomery is excited to announce that Jim Gill, children's musician and author, will be the special speaker for Sensational Saturday 2017.

Dothan's Sensational Saturday is scheduled for January 28, 2017 and Montgomery's Sensational Saturday will be held on February 25, 2017.

Jim Gill is a musician and author with singular credentials among children's artists. Jim spent twenty years directing programs in music play for families and children with special needs in the Chicago area.

His particular writing style, combining word play and movement opportunities into songs, was developed through this work. Jim completed his graduate studies in child development at the Erikson Institute of Chicago with a special emphasis on the study of play. His work experience and studies have led Jim to create each of his recordings and books as an opportunity for playful interactions between a child and a caring adult.

Jim has released seven award-winning CDs of music play for young children that are favorites in family rooms, classrooms and playrooms. Jim is also the author of two children's books. Over the years he has received five awards from the American Library Association for his releases.

Visit his website at www.jimgill.com



Circle time is a term used by many teachers to describe a time when the whole class meets together, sitting in a circle, either on the floor or on chairs. Circle time is a wonderful way to share ideas, introduce concepts and have fun learning. It's a carefully planned time in which children can develop a wide range of skills, attitudes, and behaviors.

When putting together your plans for circle time, it is important to consider three areas so as to maximize the effectiveness of the group circle time experience. First, we should consider the age, developmental stages, and the attention spans of the children in the group. Second, we should look at the interests of the children and the experiences in a group setting that would be most appropriate, and third, we should look at the physical setting for the group circle time, length of time of the group experience, and the time of day for it to be held. General awareness of these factors can help us to make appropriate decisions and adjustments in the activities and focus areas of the circle time experience. Circle time can be a wonderful center of our day that can be built upon when we consider the following in our planning:

Focus on fun and learning

- Is the way they are sitting truly important when children are listening, participating and engaged? More time spent telling them where and how to sit is learning time lost. Also, the children that were focused have now disengaged and moved onto something else.

Right place, wrong time

Consider these questions when scheduling circle time:

- Are they tired?
- Are they hungry?
- Have they already been sitting for an extended period of time?

When the answer to any of these is yes, this is not the time for group. The children's attention will be focused on something else than the task at hand. Remember, if you engage them, grab their attention and interact with them; they tend to stay focused on you.

Too much of a good thing

- Circle time should be short. K.I.S.S it. Keep it short and simple. Read your audience. Squirring, wiggling and wandering can be a sign that the children have lost interest. Be prepared to stop and move to another activity.
- If this becomes a reoccurring event, investigate why this is not working. Children love routines and schedules, but we have to be willing to adapt to meet their needs.

Set yourself up for success! Thinking ahead of what you will need will create a smoother circle time. Be prepared. Know what you want from circle time and know the children that you are teaching. Set your expectations based on what is developmentally appropriate for your age group. For instance, toddlers are not going to spend 15 minutes sitting together, while you read a story, talk about the day or sing a song.

Off to a great start

- Plan time to transition to and from circle time. A child's brain is more prepared to pay attention after they spend time moving. Get those wiggles and giggles out before you start by jumping five times or sing "Head, Shoulder, Knees and Toes" before settling down for circle time.

Get organized!

- Avoid playing the waiting game. Be ready to go when you start circle time. Have your needed materials ready to go. Use a box, basket or container labeled "Circle Time" to keep materials that you use regularly during this time. Create an inviting space that takes into consideration the number of children, movement and activity in the area. Plan for children who get antsy by providing them a fidget. A fidget is something for them to put in their hands to help them focus, such as a bath scrunchy (string cut off), stress ball or even a book to hold.

You are a SUPER model

- Show your children what you expect. Model what you want to see. Circle time is a time to be animated and engaging. Be energetic and excited about what you are presenting. No one wants to sing or be read to like Oscar the Grouch. Have fun and your children will follow.

Email Update



Please make sure that the Child Care Education and Training Program in your region has your correct email address. We continue to utilize our database to keep you updated on information about training opportunities available to you.



Special Events Spotlight



Library Open House - Montgomery

On Monday, July 18, 2016, the Resource Library in Montgomery held an open house. A special thank you to everyone who attended. Angie Mustin, pictured, was the winner of the give-away basket. Make plans to visit the Resource Library in your Region. There is a wealth of information available for check out. The Resource Specialist in each region is available to help you select materials to use with the children in your classroom.

Art Saturday - Montgomery

On Saturday, August 13, 2016, the Child Care Education and Training Program in Montgomery held an Art Saturday - *Pop Goes the Easel*. We had 18 providers attend the 4 hour training. Participants came prepared to get "messy" and completed over 15 art projects during the class. We had some very creative providers in the group. Pictured are some of the participants working on their art projects.



Alabama Early Learning Guidelines - Montgomery

12 providers from the Montgomery Region recently completed the Alabama Early Learning Guidelines course and will receive their Alabama Early Learning Guidelines Credential from The State of Alabama Department of Human Resources. Pictured are the participants enjoying one of the many activities included in the AELG course.



Opening Doors - Dothan

Lynda Weaver of Atlanta, Ga, was the keynote speaker for the Opening Doors for Children with Special Needs Conference held on Saturday, August 27, 2016. The title of the training was *Including All Children*.



Lynda shared her experiences, knowledge, ideas and activities when working with special needs children. One of the many ideas she shared was the importance of relationships. She stated that relationships are the most important things you teach and children learn. Her focus for the workshop was children with special needs are more like other children than they are different. Participants left the workshop with a wealth of knowledge and activities they can use with the children each day.

Continue to check the training calendar in your region for special training events!

Felt Activities

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.

New Look for Certificates



For each training certificate that you receive from Family Guidance Center of Alabama, the following information will be provided: Minimum Standards Training Area(s), Alabama Pathways Core Knowledge Area(s), CDA Content Area(s), CCDF Area(s), and the Target Age Group(s). On the back of each certificate you will find the Training Legend which details more information about each of these areas. Enclosed with your Child Care Connections Newsletter is a DHR 2016 Training Legend to be used when selecting your training classes.

Toddler Quality Tip

Toddler Play

Play is a toddler's "job." It is our "job" as toddler caregivers to facilitate a child's play by providing:

- Age-appropriate toys and materials
- Ample time for toddlers to explore their imagination and creativity
- Ample time to let the toddler experience the materials around them. It is okay if it's not the "right" way...let him show you a "new way."
- Ample time for the toddler to be independent. "Me do it!" is a way that toddlers take charge of what they are playing with or doing.
- Just enough "help" to allow a toddler to try "doing it for himself!"

- As toddler caregivers we should:
- Follow the child's lead
 - Allow time to play
 - Know our toddlers' personalities



Update for Directors

Every other month, the FGC Training Department offers a thirty-minute teleconference for Directors. One hour credit is given. This is a convenient way to gain insight and to connect with other Directors in your area. Without leaving your center, you can learn about new trends in child care and engage in discussion about ways to improve your center and staff dynamics.

Our next teleconference is entitled, "*Pre-K, Kindergarten, First Grade - Which Is It?*" It will be held October 5th, from 12pm - 12:30pm.

This quarter, both Dothan and Montgomery locations will be offering trainings for directors. These trainings are the **Especially for Directors** series and are held for Owners, Directors and Assistant Directors of day care centers. Please check your calendars for the dates, times and locations of these upcoming directors trainings.

DATES OUR OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED

October 10, 2016 - Columbus Day
November 11, 2016 - Veteran's Day
November 24, 2016 - Thanksgiving
December 26, 2016 - Christmas

CDA Update

The Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential is the most widely recognized credential in early childhood education (ECE) and is a key stepping stone on the path of career advancement in ECE. The Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential is based on a core set of competency standards, which guide early care professionals as they work toward becoming qualified teachers of young children.

Benefits of the Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential

- Advance your career
- Meet job requirements
- Reinforce your commitment to early childhood education
- Provide parents with peace of mind
- Understand developmentally appropriate practice
- Increase your confidence

For more information on the CDA, please visit their website www.cdacouncil.org or call the Training Program in your region.

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 FGC Online Training Specialist, or, if necessary, please leave your name, phone number and a brief message and your call will be returned.

Registration For Classes

Registration Procedures

- Registration is on a first come, first served basis.
- To attend any class please call the number listed below and on the calendar grid.
- Cancellation calls are accepted prior to the training. **Please remember that if you are not able to attend, by calling you will allow someone else to use that slot.**

Registration Guidelines

- To register in Montgomery, please call 334.270.4100 ext. 235 or 1.800.499.6597 if long distance. To register in Dothan, please call 334.712.7777 ext. 227 or 1.800.290.0933 if long distance.
- At either location, you may leave a voice mail message after office hours on the appropriate extension.
- Walk-ins will be accommodated as seating allows.

Registration Notes

SINCE CHILD CARE IS NOT AVAILABLE, PLEASE MAKE OTHER ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUR CHILDREN.

Family Guidance Center's training is open to all persons regardless of race, color, national origin, handicapping disability, age, sex, political beliefs or religions. If your attendance is hindered by transportation, language, location or any other reason, you may contact the Montgomery office at 334.270.4100 or 1.800.499.6597 or the Dothan office at 334.712.7777 or 1.800.290.0933 to discuss the matter. As resources are available, attempts will be made to overcome obstacles that hinder attendance. Funding provided by Alabama Department of Human Resources.