

CHILD CARE CONNECTIONS



A publication of Family Guidance Center of Alabama



October, November, December 2023

Let Them Play!!

"Children learn as they play. Most importantly in play they learn how to learn." Fred Donaldson, PhD., author, and play specialist.

As children play, they develop cognitive, physical, emotional and social skills. It provides opportunities for problem solving, making choices, socializing, and many new experiences.

Research has shown how crucial play is to children's overall health, development, and well-being. In most child care settings, the majority of learning takes place through play. However, in some settings, the pressure to shift from play to more of an academic/structured approach is being felt. So, what happens when children are not given the chance to play? Unfortunately, it can affect various parts of a child's development.

The physical impact: Not only does the lack of play contribute to reduced physical skills, strength and development, it contributes to the rise in childhood obesity. According to the Center for Disease Control from 2017 - 2020, obesity among 2- to 5-year-olds was 12.7% and in 6- to 11-year-olds, 20.7% . This can be contributed to their diet as well as not enough movement. Children need the opportunity to be outside in fresh air, running, jumping, climbing, and playing. They also need to be moving while they are indoors by dancing and exercising. Children today are much more sedentary than previous generations for a variety of reasons. Therefore, it is our task as early educators to make sure to allow them the chance for physical movement.

The intellectual impact: The reduction of play limits a child's creativity and imagination. They need to explore and inspire their creative side as well as expand their imagination. During play children can use their creativity and imagination to create art, draw, build or perform. This can also have an affect on their emotional development. When children play it allows them to practice skills and concepts that they have learned and apply them to real world situations. It might be setting up a make-believe restaurant or garden center.

The social impact: In the past decades there has been a decline in play partly because adults are in control of the activities for children. This leaves no room for children to make choices for themselves. There is also a trend in children doing more individualized activities and screen time. When children play, it allows them to work together, communicate, share, negotiate, solve conflicts, and build friendships. These are skills that will be important to them for the rest of the lives. Without enough time to play, children are encountering problems during more formal social interactions because they lack the necessary skills.

As you can see, play is valuable for children's development. By creating games, building forts, blowing bubbles, and drawing pictures children will build lifelong skills they continue to grow.



RESOURCE LIBRARY

The Resource Libraries in Dothan and Montgomery have lots of great ideas and materials for you this quarter!

Dothan

October 2 - 6: New Materials Expo & Fall Theme Ideas

December 4 - 8: Christmas Jingles and Hot Cocoa

Library hours are 8:30am - 11:30 am; 1:00pm - 3:30pm

Monday through Friday (*evening appointments available*)

Resource Specialist:

**Michelle Woodham (334) 712-7777 ext. 224

Montgomery

October 12: Pete the Cat and the Treasure Map

November 9: Storytime STREAM

December 14: The Gingerbread Baby

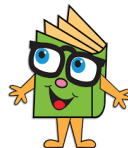
Library hours are 8:30am - 11:30 am; 1:00 pm - 4:30 pm

Monday through Friday (*evening appointments available*)

Resource Specialist:

**Lisa Kirkland (334) 270-4100 ext. 267

Be sure to check out the Library Newsletters emailed each month.



Infant/Toddler Conference

Family Guidance Center of Alabama and the Infant/Toddler Network present

Early Beginnings:

Building A Strong Foundation for Learning, Language, and Play

with guest speaker, Dr. Rebecca Isbell

Saturday, October 28, 2023

9:00 am - 1:00 pm via ZOOM

Session topics include:

1. Providing a Nurturing Environment for Creative Thinkers and Active Learners
2. Inspiring Language Development during the Critical Early Years
3. The Power of Engaging Play

Please see the calendar insert for the following:



- Registration procedures
- Trainings in person and via ZOOM

- Especially for Directors classes
- CCDF Health and Safety classes



OTHER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES



Zoom Training Opportunities hosted by the INFANT TODDLER NETWORK **Strategies for Supporting Toddlers with Autism**

Tuesday, October 10 -- 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Registration link: <https://forms.gle/tjWMUV1LjspCdBd46>

Talking with Families about Developmental Concerns

Tuesday, October 17 -- 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Registration link for October: <https://forms.gle/pBxtQ3LSw92GkozT8>

Thursday, November 30 – 12:30 – 1:30 p.m. (repeated session)

Registration link for November: <https://forms.gle/CRube9Cc6uYMZ3S67>



ALABAMA PUBLIC TELEVISION'S EARLY CHILDHOOD ONLINE FALL 2023 TRAINING COURSES

Registration for fall facilitated classes opens

Monday, September 11, 2023 @ <https://aptv.org/education/learn-online/>

- AELG Online (Alabama Early Learning Guidelines) October 2- November 20, 2023
- ACEs: Understanding and Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences: October 2- October 23, 2023
- Character Education: Life's Little Lessons with Daniel Tiger and Friends: October 2- October 23, 2023
- Essentials of High-Quality Early Care and Education: October 30- November 20, 2023
- Kindergarten Readiness: Essential Math Skills for Preschoolers: October 30-November 20, 2023

Scan the QR code to access information regarding APT's fall facilitated course registration.



APT's on-demand, 2-hour trainings are always available on their website.

<https://aptv.org/education/learn-online/>

For more APT training opportunities see the Dothan and Montgomery Training calendars .



Infant and Toddler Safety Practices

As sleepy infants progress into busy crawlers, cruisers, and walkers, their world expands beyond cribs and play mats. This time of exploration brings on new challenges as far as their supervision. This bigger world contains more hazards, and their new physical development helps them find these hazards. Rocking chairs, doors, drawers and even toys with small openings can pose finger pinch dangers. Frequently used electrical outlets will be of much interest to the curious child who may place objects into sockets as they have observed adults do. They might attempt to remove outlet safety covers. Toy boxes with lids challenge cruisers to pull up, open and locate toys but heavy lids can pinch fingers and even fall onto the child's head, neck, or body. Of course, these are just a few hazards they face. Supervision is the key to making all this exploration healthy and safe for busy young children. With adequate supervision and guidance, crawlers, cruisers, and beginning walkers will maneuver obstacles and hazards unscathed. As you guide their progress and demonstrate safe behaviors, they will begin to develop an awareness of safety practices.



FIRE SAFETY

Fire Prevention Week is October 8-14, 2023



Infants

Introduce Fire Safety Colors, Sounds and Images



Warm and Cold Sensory Play: Wet several facecloths. Set them in the freezer for just a few minutes. Wet a few more facecloths with warm water. Give each child a cold facecloth and a warm facecloth. Let them manipulate them to discover hot and cold.

Firetruck Play: Provide an age-appropriate firetruck with sounds to acclimate the children to the alarm sounds. Create a box firetruck to play in.

Fire Drill Practice: Place babies in cribs and roll them around as you would during a fire to condition them to the crib being moved. Talk or sing to them as you do.

Toddlers

Stay Low and Go

Materials: a small bed sheet or fabric, buzzer, bell or alarm

Teach the children that when there is smoke in the room, they need to get out of the room. The best way to do that is to "Stay low and go." Have the children take turns holding the sheet pretending it is smoke). The teacher sounds an alarm and the children, one by one, get low and crawl under the sheet to exit the "smoke".

A Little Fire (to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb")

Someone saw a little fire

Little fire little fire

Someone saw a little fire (*Squat up and down.*)

And we all called for help...HELP! (*Put hands to mouth and yell HELP!*)

Firefighters waved a hose

Waved a hose, waved a hose

Firefighters waved a hose



Preschoolers

Beyond the Typical Fire Safety Activities

Explain about smoke alarms and why exits are labeled with signs. Tour your area, center or school and have the children identify and count the smoke alarms and exits. Have them create exit signs to hang at child level on the exit doors. Use die cut white letters to be glued onto red card stock. Guide the children in placing the letters of the word "EXIT" in order. Laminate the signs and let the children help post them on the doors at child level.

Play "Whisper the Meeting Spot". The children sit in the circle. The teacher tells one child a meeting spot in the classroom. (You can play this outdoors as well.) That child then whispers the meeting spot to the one seated to his right. This continues around the circle. When everyone has heard where the meeting spot is, ring the alarm, bell or buzzer and have the children go to the meeting spot they were told. See if they all go to the same place or are confused. Play again.



School Aged:

Chain of Firefighters

Materials: paper circles or hula hoops, tape, balloons or small balls, 2 baskets, orange, yellow and red tissue paper

Have the children stand in a straight line (or two lines) inside hula hoops or circles drawn or taped onto the floor. Place one basket at the beginning and one at the end of the line. Add orange, yellow and red tissue paper in the end basket. Instruct the children pass each balloon from one person to next to put out the fire. After, talk about the fact that just one balloon didn't put out the fire. It took each child continuing the job until the fire was out (the paper was covered with the balls or balloons). Talk about what would happen if one of them stepped out of line and didn't do their part. Express to the children how orderliness and teamwork can keep you safe.





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www.familyguidancecenter.org

Our office will be closed on the following dates:

October 9, 2023	November 10, 2023
November 23 & 24, 2023	December 25, 2023



Featured Collaborations with Community Partners

The Family Sunshine Center offers training at FGC in areas such as Online Safety for Children and Adults and Child Abuse Prevention.

United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) offers training opportunities for early childhood professionals working with children with special needs.

Truman Pierce Institute (TPI) offers preschool and school-age trainings for child care professionals.

Wallace Community College hosts ECE trainings on the Dothan/Eufaula campuses.

Lurleen B. Wallace /MacArthur Campus hosts training on the Opp campus.

Healthy Child Care Alabama offers CPR/First Aid certification classes as well as CCDF classes each quarter at FGC.

Alabama Public Television provides training and materials for child care providers. **See APT schedule in this newsletter**, as well as our training calendars for APT classes).

Montgomery County Extension Office teaches classes for child care providers on Gardening Activities for Children.

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

T.E.A.C.H. ALABAMA EARLY CHILDHOOD SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

- A project of Alabama Partnership for Children, helps early learning professionals increase their level of education and effectiveness in the classroom by making the educational process more attainable and affordable
- For more information, contact Michelle Raybon, 334-271-0304.

LEADERSHIP IN CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP

- The scholarships are funded by the Department of Human Resources. For additional information, contact Virginia Frazer, Leadership in Child Care Scholarship program assistant, at (334) 293-4552 or by email at virginia.frazer@accs.edu.

CDA CREDENTIAL

- For information about the Child Development Associate credential, visit <https://www.cdacouncil.org/en/>

