Save the Dates

The Going to School Telecourse is a distance telecourse offered in partnership with Alabama Public Television and FGC. Please call your local Training Department for more practical advice on supporting children.

July, August, September Newsletter/Calendar 2018

Alabama Early Learning Guidelines - Montgomery
August 4 - August 23, 2018

Opening Doors for Children with Special Needs Conference - Dothan
August 25, 2018

Going to School (Telecourse)

www.familyguidancecenter.org

Save the Dates

Gold Rush Gala 2018
Family Guidance Center of Alabama will be holding its annual Gold Rush Gala on Friday, July 20 at 6:30 PM at the Alabama Activity Center on Dexter Avenue in downtown Montgomery. This western themed evening is the agency’s largest fundraising event and it promises to be lots of fun again this year. The evening will include dinner from Jim N Nick’s, a silent auction, musical entertainment, cash bar, and grand prize drawings for $2,000, $3,000, and $5,000. Tickets are $100 which admits two people and all the proceeds benefit the agency and its programs and services. Family Guidance Center, which has been serving the community for over 59 years. Call us at 270-4180 or 800-499-6597 or visit our website at www.familyguidancecenter.org.

FGC Walk/Run 2018
Family Guidance Center of Alabama will be hosting its Annual 5K/10K Walk/Run on Saturday, September 8 at 7:30 AM at The Shoppes at EastChase in Montgomery. All proceeds to benefit the programs and services of the agency. Start your weekend off well and come on out and walk or run with us. Always loads of fun. Great prizes and food. Get more info or register at www.familyguidancecenter.org. Thanks everyone!

Family Guidance Center of Alabama
545 West Main Street, Suite 311
Dothan, Alabama 36301

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July, August, Sept 2018

Helping Children Feel Safe and Secure after Disasters - NAEYC

Disasters can leave children feeling frightened, confused, and insecure. And kids’ responses can be quite varied. It’s important to not only recognize these reactions, but also help children cope with their emotions.

Trust and security are the foundations of healthy development. To explore the world and learn, children need to have secure, trusting relationships with the adults around them and know that they will keep them safe. As child care providers, we need to send children the message that their needs will be consistently met in places that are safe, secure, and reliable.

Children’s responses to trauma closely reflect the way their parents and teachers respond. If they communicate that they are coping with the situation and everything will be okay, children are likely to be more resilient.

Age also influences how a child responds to trauma. Understanding child development provides insight into how a child is processing a situation and dealing with fears. For example, young preschoolers are beginning to separate fantasy from reality. You can help them figure out whether their fears are based on reality and understand that nightmares don’t mean that bad things are still happening.

Tips for Helping Children Who Have Experienced a Disaster

Provide loving, nurturing comfort and care. Offer extra hugs and closeness.

Answer children’s questions directly, honestly, and age appropriately. Explain disaster-related language in terms children will understand. Don’t offer more information than children are interested in, and don’t force children to talk. Be prepared to answer the same questions over and over.

Review with children their daily schedule – wake up, go to school, play and learn at school, pickup, dinner, and bedtime. Routines make children feel secure.

Remind children that their parents will be there at the end of the day. Establish or strengthen rituals to reinforce this. “When you finish the afternoon meeting, it will be time to take the bus home.”

Encourage children to express their emotions – even anger. Help children understand their feelings and find healthy outlets for them. Provide lots of art materials, sand and water play, dance, and dramatic play where children can safely express sadness and anger.

Point out good things that have happened, such as people helping each other and the community banding together.

Remind children that they’re safe, and point out all the ways that parents and teachers make them safe. Post, review, and practice evacuation plans with the children.

Create cozy spaces where children can be alone, be sad, be angry, or think about things. Add beanbag chairs, pillows, and stuffed animals for comfort.

Read aloud books about disasters, such as Freddy the Frogcaster and the Huge Hurricane, by Janice Dean, to encourage discussion. Offer appropriate comments: “The frog in the story is very helpful. There were lots of kind people who helped us after the hurricane.”

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Encourage children to express their emotions - even anger. Help children understand their feelings and find healthy outlets for them. Provide lots of art materials, sand and water play, dance, and dramatic play where children can safely express sadness and anger.

Come up with projects where children help others affected by a traumatic event, such as making get well cards for people in the hospital. Helping activities build compassion and give children a sense of control.

Reassure children that they’re safe, and point out all the ways that parents and teachers make them safe. Post, review, and practice evacuation plans with the children.

Offer stress-reducing activities such as yoga, meditation, and mindfulness exercises.

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Point out good things that have happened, such as people helping each other and the community banding together.

Mr. Rogers famously talked about what he was told as a child when he saw scary things on the news: “My mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.’ Early childhood teachers are the frontline helpers who can help traumatized children rebound.
Spirit of Excellence Awards

Family Guidance Center’s Child Care Education and Training Program in Montgomery celebrated the Week of the Young Child with our Spirit of Excellence Awards Luncheon - Celebrating Child Care Leaders on April 25, 2018. During the event we honored 4 leaders in the field of early childhood education.

Dorothy Flowers, of the Success by Six Program - MLK Elementary, and Jennifer Mitchell, of Little Learner’s Learning Center, were awarded the Dedication to Children Award. Dorothy has been active in the field of early childhood education for 39 years as a child care center director, child care center teacher and a kindergarten teacher in the Montgomery school system. Dorothy presently is a Pre-K teacher with FGCS’s Success by Six Program in Montgomery. Dorothy’s love for children and her devotion to education is seen through her many years of service to the children in our area. Jennifer Mitchell started Little Learner’s Learning Center 10 years ago in Montgomery. Jennifer works side by side with her staff and believes that you lead by example. Jennifer is dedicated to providing quality care for children and peace of mind for her parents. Jennifer believes learning should be fun.

Elizabeth G. Sankey, of Southlawn Child Care Center in Montgomery, was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award. Elizabeth has 28 years of experience in the child care field and is a strong advocate for Alabama’s children. Mrs. Sankey also helps promising entrepreneurs know that dreams do come true. Her mantra is don’t give up, stay committed and persistence wins. Mrs. Sankey also directs the Early Childhood Education Program at Southlawn. Elizabeth was recently inducted into the Alabama Child Care Hall of Fame. Elizabeth believes learning should be fun.

Jennifer Mitchell, of Little Explorer Learning Center, was awarded the Dedication to Children Award. Jennifer believes learning should be fun. Jennifer Mitchell is a long-time child care professional and has been active in the field for 25 years. Jennifer started Little Explorer Learning Center in 2012. Jennifer is dedicated to providing quality care for children and peace of mind for her parents. Jennifer believes learning should be fun.

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