



Family Guidance Center of Alabama  
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Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit #409  
Montgomery, AL

[www.familyguidancecenter.org](http://www.familyguidancecenter.org)

## April, May, June Newsletter/Calendar 2018

### Save the Dates



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

#### Resource Library Open House - Dothan

March 20, 2018

3:00 pm - 7:00 pm

#### Spirit of Excellence Awards Luncheon - Montgomery

*Celebrating Child Care Leaders* - April 25, 2018

#### Supporting Children with Special Needs Conference

Montgomery - May 19, 2018

*Caring for Children with Speech and Hearing Challenges and a Parent's Perspective on Autism Spectrum Disorder*

#### Science Saturday - Montgomery

June 9, 2018

*What is a Scientist?*

#### Opening Doors for Children with Special Needs Conference - Dothan

August 2018

### Gold Rush Gala 2018

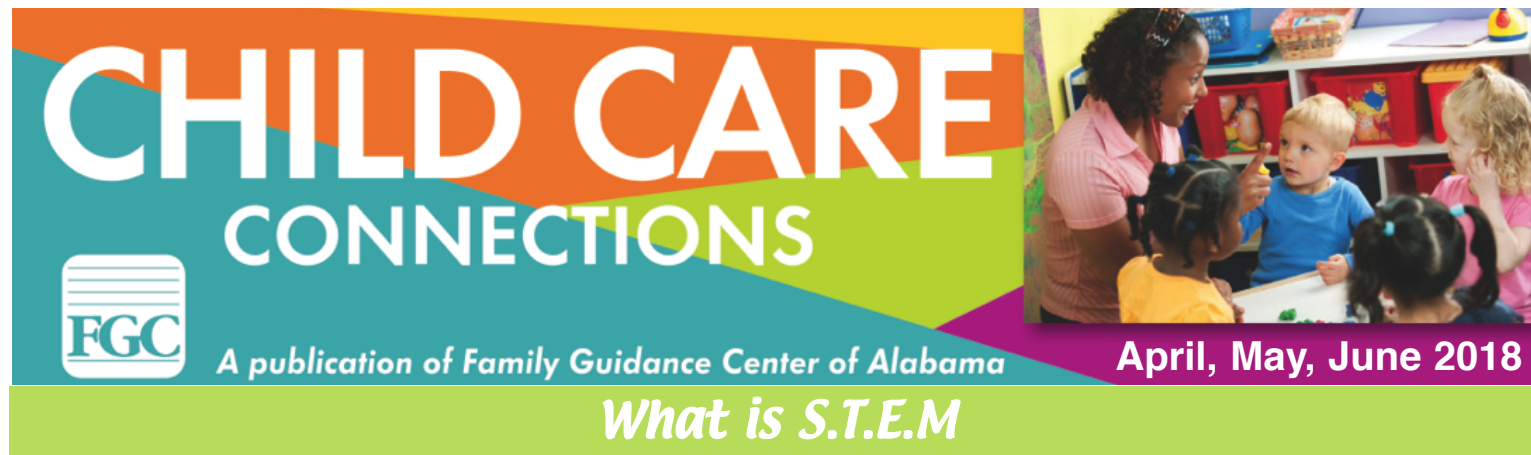
Family Guidance Center of Alabama will be holding its annual Gold Rush Gala on Friday, July 20 at 6:30 PM at the Alabama Activity Center on Dexter Avenue in downtown Montgomery. This western themed evening is the agency's largest fundraising event and it



promises to be lots of fun again this year. The evening will include dinner, a silent auction, musical entertainment, cash bar, and grand prize drawings totaling \$10,000!! Tickets are \$100 which admits two people and all the proceeds benefit the many programs and services of Family Guidance Center, which has been serving the community for over 59 years. Ask us about how you can get tickets by calling us at 270-4100 or 800-499-6597 or visit our website at [www.familyguidancecenter.org](http://www.familyguidancecenter.org).

So, put on your favorite western outfit and come on out to have a great time and support a wonderful organization on July 20.

**We are going to have a great time! See you there!!**



### What is S.T.E.M

STEM is a term that was initiated by the National Science Foundation. It refers to a philosophy which integrates the areas of science, technology, engineering, and math. STEM is a way of thinking about how adults help children to integrate knowledge across disciplines, encouraging them to think in a more connected way. With a little guidance from adults, we can provide additional opportunities for children to engage in STEM activities. Consider these ideas:



Provide an assortment of building blocks for young children. When they make bridges, buildings, and ramps, they are incorporating engineering, math, and science. Add technology by encouraging children to use a computer to research the projects they work on. Build ramps to test which balls, cars or marbles go the fastest or farthest. Ramps can be made of blocks, a board, or cardboard.

Take a nature walk with your children. Bring bags to hold "treasures" and encourage children to collect objects of interest-leaves, stones, seed pods, flowers, etc. Once back in class, the children can sort by color size, texture, and shape - an excellent math and science activity.

Do a cooking activity together. This is another great way to incorporate science, technology, and math.

According to Joshua Sneidemen, from the Department of Energy, the most important point to remember about teaching STEM to young children is that it is not difficult because they are perfectly adapted to learn STEM concepts. You are engaging children in STEM when you tap into the child's natural curiosity about the world. Through investigation, children ask questions and discover new answers.

Our knowledge of how people learn has grown substantially over the last few decades. Children need to be presented opportunities to learn the same material in different settings and through different lenses. The traditional approach of teaching topics in isolation does not support the ways that children learn best.

The research is quite clear that the best practice in early childhood education is to break away from passive instruction and allow for more play and investigation, and this kind of learning early in life builds skills and interests that serve children throughout their school years, and later in life. Lilian G. Katz, in *STEM in the Early Years*, lays out a case that the best practice for early education is to allow students to be active, engaged, and take initiative in their own learning. Long-term research also indicates that being allowed opportunities to take initiative in your own learning is not only good for STEM learning, but for overall long-term academic success.

Early childhood education should tap into children's natural curiosity and give them ample opportunities to be active participants in their own learning. Natural settings offer children almost unlimited opportunities to explore and investigate, helping them build STEM skills that create a solid foundation for future learning.

### Sensational Saturday Child Care Conference Recap



Family Guidance Center in both Dothan and Montgomery welcomed Carole Stephens, children's musician, from Park Ridge, Illinois as the presenter for Sensational Saturday 2018. Carole presented two exciting sessions focusing on *Active Music for Active Learners: Brain Food, Body Fuel!*

On January 27, 2018, Dothan had 146 participants attend Sensational Saturday. Montgomery's conference was held on February 24, 2018 and had 379 participants attend. From the standing ovation she received, it was clear that all participants enjoyed Carole's presentation. Thanks again to everyone who attended Sensational Saturday.

Carole really enjoyed the Southern Hospitality shown to her in both Dothan and Montgomery.

**You truly helped to make it a "Sensational Saturday"!**



## Celebrating Child Care Leaders

Family Guidance Center's *Spirit of Excellence Awards Luncheon - Celebrating Child Care Leaders* will be held on April 25, 2018 in Montgomery. The Awards Luncheon promises to be a great opportunity to highlight the important work of child care providers in our area.

We know that there are many outstanding leaders in the field of early childhood education and our Spirit of Excellence Awards provide a wonderful opportunity to highlight the importance of leadership. If you would like to submit a nominee to be considered, please call the Child Care Education and Training Program at 800-499-6597 ext 289 and request a Nomination Form. The deadline for submission is March 30, 2018 at 4:30 pm.

We are excited to help celebrate the Week of the Young Child by focusing on the importance of your role in the lives of young children.



## Week of the Young Child

This year's Week of the Young Child™ celebration will be observed April 16-20. Celebrate during this special week with these activities recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

**Music Monday!** - Sing, dance, celebrate, and learn

**TRY THIS:** Find the beat to connect music, movement, and math. Practice clapping, drumming, or stomping to the beat of the music while counting.

**Tasty Tuesday** - Healthy eating and fitness at home and school

**TRY THIS:** Measure your ingredients while making your snacks! Ask children if they'd like the same or different amounts of each ingredient.

**Work Together Wednesday** - Work together, build together, learn together

**TRY THIS:** Practice organizing blocks by size! Try building a block tower with large blocks on the bottom and little blocks on top!

**Artsy Thursday** - Think, problem solve, create

**TRY THIS:** Bring art outdoors! Offer dark and light paper, chalk and pastels, and suggest children create their own version of the day and night sky.

**Family Friday** - Sharing family stories

**TRY THIS:** Invite parents for a Family Friday breakfast, where children can prepare and share breakfast treats with their families!



## Activities

### Infant Activity - Feather Sensory Play

**Materials:** Box, soft feathers to fill container, larger objects such as: blocks, plastic eggs, or rubber ducks to hide in feathers

Fill box with soft feathers. Hide larger objects under the feathers which the infants can grasp. Allow the infant to play in the box and discover the hidden items. This reinforces the development of the understanding of object permanence as well as exploration of the different textures.

### Toddler Activity - Feather Painting

**Materials:** Large bird shaped paper, feathers, paint

Allow exploration of the feathers. Introduce the bird shape. Allow children to paint onto the bird shaped paper with the feather and paint. This reinforces fine motor skills and sensory experiences.



### Preschool Activity - Feathered Birds

**Materials:** Bird cut out, small feathers, glue

Give preschoolers a bird shaped paper. Allow them to cover it with glue and add colored feathers. Use this time to explore the textures of the feathers as well as discuss the many colors of the feathers.

### Schoolage Activity - Feather Necklaces

**Materials:** Feathers, string, card stock 2 inch circles, stickers, washi (patterned) tape, pony beads, tape and glue, small hole punch

Tape feathers to bottom edge of one circle, then glue the two circles together. Punch hole in the top of both circles and attach the string. Encourage the students to string the beads in patterns on each side of string. Allow students to decorate the circle with stickers of birds, washi tape, etc. Knot necklace when complete.



### Infant Quality Tip Safe Spaces to Explore: An Infant's Learning Environment

Unlike adults, infants have not experienced danger. They use their 5 senses - sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste - to explore their environment. Caregivers must be the eyes and ears of these children to keep them out of danger. A good way to childproof is to get on the floor and look at things from a child's perspective. You may find some things you did not notice standing at an adult's level. Some examples may include uncovered outlets, loose/frayed carpet at baseboards or even food that was dropped from infant's highchair.



## Day for Directors Recap

On Saturday, January 20, 2018, Family Guidance Center's Child Care Education and Training Program in Montgomery held their annual Director's Conference. Dr. Jackie Alexander DiPofi from Auburn, Alabama was the presenter for the conference. Jackie's presentation focused on the effective RAMPS (research, advertising, merchandising, promotions, and sales) model of marketing. We had 47 child care directors, assistant directors, and owners attend the four hour conference. Comments from the participants indicated Jackie's presentation provided them with valuable information on marketing their child care center.



If you would like more information about the RAMPS Model, we have Jackie's book available for check-out in the Dothan and Montgomery Resource Libraries.

### Toddler Quality Tip "Going on a Ladybug Hunt"

Spring is finally here! Spring brings warmer weather and ladybugs, lots and lots of ladybugs... A great activity for toddlers is to take them on a ladybug hunt. But, before going on the hunt, help your toddlers make a Ladybug Hat. It only takes construction paper, something to use for the dots and eyes (if you use wiggly eyes - use with supervision), and the child's imagination. Let the children have fun decorating their hat. Now you and your toddlers can go on a Ladybug Hunt and enjoy the spring weather.



## Update for Directors

Every other month, the FGC Training Program 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. This quarter a director teleconference will be held on:

**Wednesday, May 9th from 12 pm - 12:30 pm:**

*Playing on the Same Team: Involving and Communicating with Parents*

**Please see the Dothan or Montgomery training calendar for more information on the director's teleconferences.**

## DATES OUR OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED

April 23, 2018 – Confederate Memorial Day

May 28, 2018 – Memorial Day

June 4, 2018 – Jefferson Davis' Birthday

## CDA Update

A CDA (Child Development Associate) is a national credential awarded by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition. There are four credential settings that can be applied for:

- Center-based, preschool (working with children 3-5 years old)
- Center-based, infant-toddler (working with children birth-36 months)
- Family Child Care (working with children birth-5 years old)
- Home Visitor (working with families of children birth-5 years old)

Visit the CDA website ([www.cdacouncil.org](http://www.cdacouncil.org)) for more information on obtaining a CDA Degree.

For more information on the CDA credential, please call the Family Guidance Center training program in Dothan (334) 712-7777 ext. 224 or Montgomery (800) 499-6597 ext. 235.

## Online Training Opportunities

Family Guidance Center partners with ProSolutions Training to offer online 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 the 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

Primary Position at Center/Home	Required DHR Hours	Online Hours
Center Director	24 hours yearly	12 hours yearly
Center Teacher	12 hours yearly	6 hours yearly
Center Support Staff	4 hours yearly	2 hours yearly
Family Child Care Provider	20 hours yearly	10 hours yearly

If you are interested in this training opportunity, please call the training department for more information.

## Dothan - Resource Library

Good news, we are ready for you to visit the newly relocated Resource Library in the Dothan office!

We are excited to welcome our new Resource Specialist, Michelle Glaze, to the Dothan Training Program. Michelle's background and experiences in early childhood are clearly visible in her passion for working with young children and providers. She is ready to assist you with lesson plans, activity ideas and more! The Resource Library is open from 8:30 am - 4:30 pm Monday through Friday (closed from 12:00 - 1:00 pm for lunch) with no appointment. We hope you will drop by the Resource Library, meet Michelle and see what we have to offer! If you have any questions, you may contact Michelle at 334-712-7777 ext. 224, 1-800-290-0933, or by email [michelle.glaze@dhr.alabama.gov](mailto:michelle.glaze@dhr.alabama.gov).