



Family Guidance Center of Alabama
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www.familyguidancecenter.org

July, August, September Newsletter/Calendar 2022

New Library Resources

The Resource Library in the Montgomery Region has the following new books that are available for check out.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice - 4th Edition

Teaching STEM Outdoors

Body Safety Education - Patty Born Selly

Nonfiction in Motion - Jayneen Sanders

Not Everyone is Nice - Frederick Alimonti and An Tedesco

Let's Talk About Body Boundaries, Consent and Respect - Jayneen Sanders

Remember the Resource Room is open on a limited basis, so call to make an appointment.

Many Thanks

The Child Care Education and Training Programs in Dothan and Montgomery would like to say a special Thank You to the child care providers that we serve. When COVID 19 disrupted our face to face trainings, your participation in the child care training classes via ZOOM and the Conference Call System enabled us to continue to meet your training needs and stay connected.

Thank you for all you are doing to continue to provide care for the children in the Dothan and Montgomery Regions.

Agency Events 2022

Stepping Up For Families in 2022

A Virtual Event to Benefit Family Guidance Center of Alabama

Tuesday, August 23 at 6:30 PM

A Live Streaming Event on Facebook and ZOOM

The evening will include valuable prizes from local merchants and 3 cash drawings. The cash prizes will be the grand prize of \$4,000, the 2nd prize of \$2,000, and the 3rd prize of \$1,000. Merchant prizes will be purchased by FGC to give away to show our support for the business community and to promote business for local merchants during the pandemic. Tickets are \$100 each and only 500 tickets are sold. Proceeds benefit the programs and services of Family Guidance Center of Alabama. For more information or tickets, contact Family Guidance Center at 334-270-4100, ext. 254 or 1-800-499-6597, ext. 254. The streaming event should be a fun way to celebrate the impact that Family Guidance Center has within Alabama and support the organization's vital work to help children, families, and seniors in need.



CHILD CARE CONNECTIONS



A publication of Family Guidance Center of Alabama



July, August, Sept 2022

WHAT IS PRETEND PLAY AND HOW DOES IT HELP CHILDREN LEARN?

In observing children, we know that children love to pretend and through this play the children are gaining valuable life experiences. Some of the areas of child development that benefit from pretend play are listed below.

Learn about themselves and the world.

Dramatic play experiences are some of the first ways children learn about their likes and dislikes, their interests, and their abilities. They experiment with role playing and work to make sense out of what they've observed. Just watch children playing with dolls to see examples of this. Dolls often become versions of the child himself and are a safe way for children to express new ideas and feelings.

Work out confusing, scary, or new life issues.

Have you ever witnessed children pretending to visit the doctor? One child dutifully holds the mock stethoscope as the others line up for a check-up. More often than not someone gets 'shots.' This is a child's way of exploring an experience that is common and sometimes confusing or scary. Through these role plays, children become more comfortable and prepared for life events in a safe way. Children often use pretend play to work out more personal challenging life events too, whether it is coping with an illness in the family, the absence of a parent or divorce, or a house fire.

Develop important complex social and higher order thinking skills. Pretend play is much more than simple play activities; it requires advanced thinking strategies, communication, and social skills. Through pretend play, children learn to do things like negotiate, consider others' perspectives, transfer knowledge from one situation to another, delay gratification, balance their own ideas with others, develop a plan and act on it, explore symbolism, express and listen to thoughts and ideas, assign tasks and roles, and synthesize different information and ideas. In this creative play description, we could just as easily be describing the skills needed to successfully manage a work project for an adult as describing children's pretend play.

Cultivate social and emotional intelligence. How we interact with others is key to our lifelong success and happiness. Knowing how to read social cues, recognize and regulate emotions, negotiate and take turns, and engage in a

long-term activity that is mutually beneficial are no easy tasks. There is no substitute for creative and imaginative play when it comes to teaching and enhancing these abilities in children.



Synthesize knowledge and skills. Because learning and child development doesn't happen in discrete pockets of time or during isolated

activities, children need opportunities to blend their skills and knowledge together. Pretend play is an ideal way to do this. Think of children playing 'grocery' store. They sort by attributes as they group similar foods in sections of the store, use math concepts to tabulate amounts as they determine prices and calculate grocery bills, use writing to communicate by making signs, experiment with shapes and weights as they organize the store, work collaboratively as they assign roles and play together, and much more.



DRAMATIC PLAY IDEAS & ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

As a parent or caregiver, you further encourage learning skills and child development as kids engage in pretending. Here are a few children's activities and tips for pretend play.

- **Use stories:** Invite your children to recreate a favorite story or take it further and add their own twist. During your pretending game, prompt their ideas by asking questions like: "What do you think happened next?" and "What if the dog didn't find his bone?"

- **Provide dolls and puppets:** Make sure your child has ample and regular access to things like dolls, stuffed animals, or puppets. These don't have to be store-bought; they can be cut out of paper or made from socks. Through imaginative play, children easily ascribe feelings and ideas to these 'people' and 'animals' and often use them to express, explore and work out their own ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

- **Create "prop boxes":** Prop boxes are something most high-quality early childhood programs have plenty of. They are boxes (or bins, crates, or bags) with themed dramatic play materials in them. It's like having a creative experience in a box.

- **Make time:** No material, environment, or story can take the place of uninterrupted time to play and explore ideas. Pretend play doesn't fit nicely into twenty minute segments. Be ok with leaving a post office in the classroom for a few days to allow your children to fully explore and enhance their creative explorations.

When we let our imaginations take over and when we really play together, as children want to do, there are no limits as to where their minds can take them and there is no chance of running out of things to enjoy and talk with them about!

New Program

Infant/Toddler Mentoring and Coaching Initiative

Family Guidance Center's Child Care Education and Training Program will be launching a new service for infant and toddler teachers in both center based as well as family child care settings. The new specialist serving the Montgomery Region is Adrienne Royster. The specialist serving the Dothan Region is Donna Murphy. The specialist will be working directly with teachers/home providers of children birth to three years of age.

If you are interested in learning more about this initiative, please call the specialist in your region. Adrienne can be reached at 334-270-4100 ext. 237. Donna can be reached at 334-712-7777 ext. 235.



Adrienne Royster



Donna Murphy

Directors Conference Recap

On Saturday April 9th, Family Guidance Center's Child Care Education and Training Programs held their annual Directors Conference via ZOOM. We had 69 child care center directors join us for the training.

Kristen Peterson, from Alexandria, MN was the presenter for the conference. Kristen's training was *The Supported Staff: Sidestepping Burnout and Keeping Staff in Early Childhood Education*. Kristen shared strategies that she has used with the staff at her child care center. She also stressed the importance of remembering to have fun throughout the day.

Congratulations!



Angela Bailey, long time Program Director of our Child Care and Education Training Program retired on May 31, 2022, after 25 years of service to Family Guidance Center. She was presented with a 25 years of service award at a retirement reception held in her honor. Best wishes to Angela and thank you for your service and leadership!

Activities

Infants: Crab Creeping and Crawling

Materials: red paper, pencils, scissors, marker, glue, craft stick

Fold paper in half. Place babies palm on the fold and trace around the hand and fingers. Cut around the sides and fingers on the paper, leaving the fold intact. Open at the fold. Draw eyes on the thumbs and add on a mouth of your choice. Cut two circles and remove a pie shape from each. Glue them to the first fingers next to the eyes for claws. Glue to a craft stick.



Toddlers: Potato Masher Crabs

Materials: Blue construction paper, potato masher, red paint, red paper strips and circles for legs and claws, eyes.

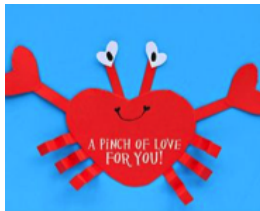
Children will dip the masher in the paint and stamp it onto the paper. Once the paint dries, they will glue on the legs, claws, and eyes.



Preschoolers: Crabby Shapes

Materials: various shapes cut from red paper, 6 small strips of paper for legs, 2 larger strips for claws, 2 circles with a pie shape piece cut out, sticker eyes, glue, and crayon.

Give each child a shape and the rest of the parts of the crab. Have them use the shape for the body and assemble the crab. Ask each to identify the shape each of them used to create their crab.



School Agers: Origami Crabigami

Materials: 8x8 or 6x6 inch red paper

Step 1) Fold the paper in half. Step 2) Fold the paper in half again. Step 3) Open up the top flap of paper over the right. Step 4) Squash fold this flap flat. Step 5) Turn the paper over. Step 6) Open up the top flap of paper over to the left and squash fold it flat. Step 7) Fold the top two flaps of paper behind along the dotted lines. Step 8) Turn the paper over. Step 9) Fold the bottom part of the paper up along the dotted line. Step 10) Fold the side flaps of paper down along the dotted lines. Step 11) Turn the paper over. Step 12) Add two sticker eyes or draw them as shown, Done!



Paper Crab

Infant Quality Tip

The early years of life are a period in which the foundation for future learning is being laid at all levels of development. Babies are communicating from day one. They use their gestures, sounds, and expressions to communicate feelings and needs like hunger, sleepiness, and joy. Understanding a baby's unique way of communication will help you meet their needs and recognize their likes and dislikes.



Hurricane Season

With hurricane season beginning on June first and a prediction of three to five possible major hurricanes Category 3 or higher for 2021, now is the time to go over your emergency preparedness plan and make sure you are ready for a worst-case storm scenario.



Any hurricane that makes landfall in the gulf coast region has the potential to impact central and south Alabama with high winds, torrential rains, and power outages. Preparation for these events includes when and whether to close the doors or remain open to continue to serve first responders who will be called upon.

Checking flashlight batteries, food, water and first aid supplies as well as updating contact information for child care workers and the parents of all enrolled children are only a few of the preparation steps to take. For more information on preparing for a hurricane, go to <https://www.fema.gov> OR <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/features/hurricanepreparedness/index.html>

According to Deanne Criswell, FEMA Administrator, "even if you're experiencing disaster fatigue due to your experience with the COVID-19 pandemic, we all must use the lessons learned from it to prepare for potential disasters on the horizon."

CDA Update

If your CDA Credential expires, you will have to reapply to obtain a new credential. Candidates should submit their renewal application on or before their expiration date. Candidates can submit their renewal application up to 6 months before their expiration date.



For more information about the CDA process, visit their website www.cdacouncil.org.

Update for Directors

The FGC Training Department offers trainings 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.

Wednesday, July 20th from 10:00 am - 11:00 am

How to Collect Tuition

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 director's trainings.

DATES OUR OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED

July 4, 2022 - Independence Day

September 5, 2022 - Labor Day

Health

Hidden Hazards on the Playground

Warm weather months add new and often hidden hazards to your list of playground dangers. You know to watch for tripping hazards or to check the temperature of playground equipment with your hand during these months. However, wasps and yellowjackets are prevalent during this time of year and pose a hazard to everyone. Wasps may choose to build nests in the shady areas underneath play structures. Yellowjackets may build nests underground as well. Watch for their activity near playground equipment, close to the ground or around the base of trees. Report any nests or sightings to someone such as the director or other designated person. Yellowjackets and wasps can sting multiple times. They are very painful and can cause allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis. Always notify parents or guardians if a child has been stung. If the person starts having symptoms such as wheezing, swelling of the throat or tongue, rash or hives, nausea, vomiting and dizziness do not hesitate to call 911 or emergency services. Safety is always a priority. Just remember to stay alert, be safe and enjoy the time outdoors.

Toddler Quality Tip

"What can be better than a warm, sunny day, a shower curtain on the grass, washable, non-toxic paints and toddlers, and a hose nearby?" Ask parents to provide a clean, white tee-shirt for their child to wear. Encourage your toddlers to roll around on the shower curtain. Messy, oh so messy, but, oh so much fun! Take the tee-shirts off the children and let them dry. Voila! One-of-a-kind tees for the toddlers to wear.



Resource Library

Family Guidance Center's Child Care Resource Library is open to patrons on a limited basis. As we continue to follow the guidelines from the Alabama Department of Public Health and the Alabama Department of Human Resources, the following policy will be in place.

- ☒ An appointment will be required to use the Resource Library. You will need to call the Resource Library in your region to schedule an appointment. The Resource Library will be open from 8:30 am - 4:30 pm.
- ☒ One patron at a time can enter the building and use the Resource Library.
- ☒ You will be required to wear a mask and gloves while in the building.

If you need die cuts and are unable to make an appointment to use the Resource Library, the Training Program staff can do them for you. Once we have completed your die cut request, they will be mailed.

RESOURCE LIBRARY