

PARTNERS

Summer 2016 / Maryland State Department of Education / Division of Early Childhood Development

New Pre-Service Training Required for All Child Care Providers



As a result of changes in the Federal Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) under which Maryland receives funding for many of the programs and services available to child care providers (Child Care Subsidy, Credentialing, Accreditation, Maryland EXCELS, Child Care Resource Centers, etc.) all child care providers will be required to complete a basic Health and Safety Training as a "NEW" pre-service training requirement and update each year of employment. The Health and Safety Training will cover 10 specific topic areas that have been identified by the CCDBG as critical for all child care providers. The training will be available on the MSDE website free of charge this fall and will also be available face-to-face from an approved trainer or training organization. The initial training, on-line or face-to-face, will count toward continued training requirements for current providers. Please stay tuned for availability of this new training.



Dr. Rolf H. Grafwallner, Assistant State Superintendent of the Division of Early Childhood Development, retired this summer after over two decades of service to Maryland's children, families and the Department of Education.

Dr. Grafwallner was instrumental in developing a statewide kindergarten assessment, the first of its kind in the country. He assisted in developing policies for all-day kindergarten for all five-year olds and the expansion of prekindergarten programs to all four-year olds who are economically disadvantaged. He lead efforts to consolidate all early care and education programs into MSDE, thereby creating a new governance model for early childhood education nationally. Also, he directed efforts to expand a statewide model of a comprehensive public/private partnership between public schools, early childhood, parenting, and health programs, known as the Judy Center Partnerships.

"I have worked at MSDE for 22 + years and it has been a wonderful experience and personal growth for me. Much of it had to do with your energy and commitment to create the best opportunities for young children. I can think of so many examples of how you have impacted the lives of our youngest ones and their families. Observing this over time was the fuel that kept me going and to have the eyes on the prize, which is getting better outcomes for our youngest children. I want to thank you for enriching my life - professionally as well as personally."

On behalf of the Division of Early Childhood Development at MSDE, we wish you the best in your new chapter in life.

What's Inside!

- NEWS.....pg 2
- PAST EVENTS.....pg 6
- JUDY CENTERS.....pg 7
- RESOURCES.....pg 10
- PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT..... pg 12
- CHILDREN ACTIVITIES.....pg 14
- UPCOMING CONFERENCES..... pg 16



News

New MSDE Superintendent Takes the Helm

On July 1 Karen Salmon officially took the helm of MSDE as the state school superintendent.



The Maryland State Board of Education unanimously voted her appointment on Tuesday, May 24.

Dr. Salmon has spent the vast majority of her career in Maryland public education. She joined the Maryland State Department of Education last August as Assistant State Superintendent for College and Career Readiness before taking over as Interim Deputy Superintendent for School Effectiveness earlier this year.

Prior to joining the MSDE staff, Dr. Salmon served as Superintendent of the Bay Shore Union Free School District in Bay Shore, NY. She moved to New York after 10 years as Superintendent of the high-performing Talbot County Public School System.

Dr. Salmon spent more than 30 years as an educator on Maryland's Eastern Shore, beginning her career as a special education teacher in the Caroline County Public Schools. She later became a vocational coordinator and an assistant principal in the Caroline schools before moving to Talbot County as Coordinator of Services for Exceptional Children. Dr. Salmon became Assistant Superintendent of the Talbot County schools in 1997 and Superintendent in 2003.

Named the Maryland Superintendent of the Year in 2012, Dr. Salmon is the recipient of numerous awards and honors throughout her educational career. Dr. Salmon holds a Ph.D. in Special Education/Administration from the University of Maryland College Park, as well as a Masters in Special Education from the same institution. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Speech Communication from the University of Delaware.

Two Early Childhood Development Bills Pass Maryland Assembly during Spring Session



SB 312/HB 0329:

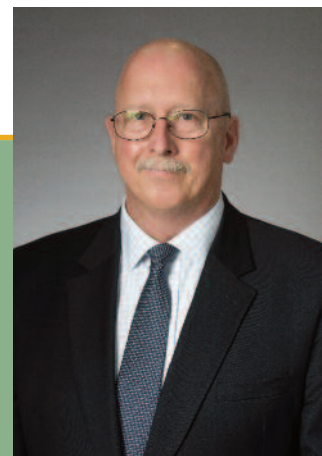
This bill requires advertisements for child care services to include specified information. The bill authorizes the State Fire Marshal to conduct an inspection of an illegally operating child care facility and expands the conditions under which a civil citation or fine may be served to include a facility is advertising child care services without being licensed or registered a citation or fine may be imposed. The bill also require the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to expand efforts to educate parents and child care providers about the requirements to be licensed or registered and to submit a report by December 1, 2017.

SB 369/HB 1095:

This bill requires local departments of social services and local health departments to provide a parent or guardian who applies for economic services with an oral and written notice that their child may be eligible for publicly funded prekindergarten programs if the parent or guardian has a child who will be four years old on September 1 of the next academic year. The notice must include contact information for the enrollment office of the local school system and the Division of Early Childhood Development in the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

Child Care Aware Names Steve Rohde President

Maryland Family Network (MFN) announced that Steve Rohde has been named President of the Board of Directors of Child Care Aware of America. Rohde is the Deputy Director for Resource and Referral Services for Maryland Family Network headquartered in Baltimore.



MARYLAND EXCELS

New Maryland EXCELS Resources for Achieving Level 3

When your program reaches Level 3 in Maryland EXCELS, you will receive additional Child Care Subsidy payments each month. One of the Level 3 requirements asks programs/providers to conduct a self-assessment using the Environment Rating Scales (ERS). Maryland EXCELS has produced three videos to help you with this

process. Each video is less than 15 minutes long and provides guidance on the rating scale and how to use it. The videos are self-paced and should be watched in order. After conducting your self-assessments, upload the score sheet pages to your Maryland EXCELS profile (ACR 2.3).

Video 1 – “Maryland EXCELS Introduction to the ERS” provides an overview and includes helpful hints of what to focus on.

Video 2 – “Conducting Your ERS Self- Assessment” provides guidance on how to conduct a self-assessment.

Video 3 – “Scoring Your ERS Self-Assessment” explains the scoring process.

<http://marylandexcels.org//ERS Self-Assessment Videos>

Provider Spotlight:



One-on-one with Valerie Burton of Happy Kids Child Care

There are thousands of providers who participate in Maryland EXCELS to find areas to improve their business and policies and to make their child care program the best it can be.

The underlying theme with all of these providers is an immense sense of pride in their business; a deep, resounding and emotional connection with the work they do and the business they run.

Maryland EXCELS had the opportunity to sit down with Valerie Burton of Happy Kids Child Care in Baltimore County, to see what motivates Valerie and to get a few tips for providers who want to use Maryland EXCELS to the fullest.

In 12 months, Valerie Burton moved from a Maryland EXCELS Level 1 to a Level 5.

Happy Kids Child Care has been open since 1993. Ms. Burton has built the business to care for up to seven (7) children and now also offers overnight child care for families. Over the years, she’s learned a lot and, as a registered family child care provider, she says, “This is our business. It’s how we live. It’s how we eat. It’s what we breathe.”

With a strong faith, Ms. Burton believes, “if you treat people right, God will treat you right”. She is proud of how close her relationship is with the families that trust her with their children and she continually tries to give her parents resources to help them with their children.

She provides three tips to remember that

can help anyone in the child care business:

- 1 If you aren’t genuine, they will know;
- 2 Cater to your kids and make them feel at home, so they are comfortable asking for things; and
- 3 Treat your children like they are your own children.

To be successful, Ms. Burton advises, “Love what you do and educate yourself. Just because [we] had children doesn’t mean we know children. They are all different.” She describes how she’s used professional development to improve her skill set, including communications and learning more about children with special needs.

When asked why she is in Maryland EXCELS, she mentions the “support” and the “marketing opportunities” to highlight her business. When asked if she has any advice for others not participating in Maryland EXCELS, she says, “It’s not as hard as some people think, other in-home providers can do it and the benefits are worth it.”

Ms. Burton and Happy Kids Child Care are nationally-accredited by the National Association for Family Child Care. She is a published Maryland EXCELS Level 5 provider in Baltimore County.

frogstreet
Continuum of Curriculum
Birth to Five

Join the conversation "On the Street"    www.frogstreet.com



Frog Street Infant
(0-18 months)



Frog Street Toddler
(18-36 months)



Frog Street Three's
(36-48 months)



Frog Street Pre-K
(4-5 years)

WIN Frog Street Pre-K Curriculum and Materials Valued at \$5,000

Your program must be a current Maryland EXCELS published participant on the dates of each drawing.

Frog Street's Pre-K curriculum is one of MSDE's recommended curricula.

Here's what you need to know:

- Dates of drawing - August 30, September 30, and October 28.
- Eligibility - any program that is published and participating on each date of the drawing. The program must have a current published rating at the time of the drawing.
- The program must be open and operating and currently participating in **Maryland EXCELS** at the time of the drawing.
- Previous winners are not eligible for subsequent drawings.
- The winner will be notified by phone and email.

The Frog Street Pre-K curriculum is a comprehensive, research-based program that integrates instruction across developmental domains and early learning disciplines. The program is engaging for both teachers and children and is easy to implement!

Frog Street also offers early childhood resources that are designed with purpose to optimize key windows of learning opportunity and follow developmental and learning continuums allowing children to use previously mastered skills to more readily achieve new skills.

For more information on Frog Street, visit www.frogstreet.com

For more information on Maryland EXCELS, visit <http://www.marylandEXCELS.org>



Credential Branch Updates

Child Care Credential Program Application Basics



You can now fax your Maryland Child Care Credential program application to Child Care Central.

**Do not mail your application packet to MSDE. Applications received at the Maryland State Department of Education for the Maryland Child Care Credential program will be returned.*

All about the IVR

Participants can receive information about their application process using the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system. Please listen to the recording in its entirety and select option 4 for credentialing. The IVR will prompt callers to enter the following information: Home phone number provided on the credentialing application and date of birth. This will allow participants to hear information about their application process and the option to talk to a live customer service representative.

Continued on Pg.5

Maryland Child Care Credential Program Applications Backlog Update

Credential program applications submitted between March 2015 and October 2015 have been processed.

Approved Administrator Credential

The Maryland Child Care Credentialing Program Administrator Credential level 4 is now recognized by the National Education for Young Children (NAEYC). An administrator credential specifies what an effective director of an early childhood program needs to know and be able to do. Achieving an administrator credential is connected to more effective administrative practices in community-based early childhood programs.

What does this mean? If you achieved a Maryland Child Care Credential level 4 it will be recognized by NAEYC Accreditation of programs for young children. Administrator level 4 Credential is aligned with the NAEYC Administrator Alternative Pathways to achieve educational qualifications for the designated program administrator.

Training Voucher and Reimbursement

Have you checked out the new DECD website?! There is now an option to submit an Application for Training Voucher and Reimbursement online. Participants who choose to submit applications online must be able to upload required documents along with each application. Incomplete applications will not be processed. Fillable PDF versions of each application are also available. **For more information, visit:** <http://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/>

Please continue to send original hard copies of Training Voucher and Reimbursement applications to:

**MSDE-Credentialing Branch
200 West Baltimore St. 10th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21201**

Credentialing participants who are first time applicants, updating an expired credential, or upgrading from level 1-2 are not eligible for training voucher/reimbursement until their credential application is processed. Renewal applicants are eligible to participate once a renewal application has been received by the office.

A new Training Voucher and Reimbursement brochure is now available on the DECD website:
<http://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/>

Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund CCCPDF 2015/2016 CCCPDF Graduates

The Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund program is proud to announce that the following participants earned their degrees during the 2015/2016 program year:

Carroll Community College

Kimberly Keplinger – Grace Church Child Care Center
Victoria Fromm – Little People's Place CDC
La-Faye Connor – Shining Stars Child Care

Chesapeake College

Donetta Thomas – Creative Corner
Angela Cintron – Family Child Care Provider
Cheryl Graham – Critchlow Adkins Children's Center

College of Southern Maryland

Gwendolyn Kelley – Family Child Care Provider
Rebecca Hancock – Family Child Care Provider

Frederick Community College

Dawn Cook – YMCA of Frederick

Hagerstown Community College

Karolyn Martin – Family Child Care Provider
Maria Smith – Family Child Care Provider

Harford Community College

Michele Cullum – Monarch Montessori School
Stefanie Daugherty – Monkton Country Daycare
Meagan Isbill Artman – Harvest Child Care Center

Howard Community College

Victoria Meehan – The Young School
Alexandra Proudfoot – Glen Mar Early Learning Center

Montgomery College

Kusuma Udagedera – Guiding Star CDC

The Community College of Baltimore County

Alicia Pugh – Family Child Care Provider

Salisbury University

Rachel Tenney – St. Paul's Lutheran BASCC

Towson University

Morgan Amend – Goddard School of Eldersburg
Susan Horman – Wee Lad and Lassie ELC
Rai Ven Hinton – The Goddard School
Leslie Eckard – The Goddard School

University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Marziyeh Farshchian – Kingsview Learning Center

University of Maryland, Eastern Shore

Audrianna Marshall Goddard – Generations Child Development Center
Tonya Davis – Wor-Wic CDC
Ashley Beatty – Critchlow Adkins Children's Center
Wendy Simpson – Critchlow Adkins Children's Center

Washington Adventist University

Maria Artola – Family Child Care Provider
Aurelia Moore – Barack Obama EELP

A new CCCPDF brochure is now available on the DECD website: <http://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/>



Revised Accreditation Standards effective July 1, 2016!

We are very pleased to announce the revised MSDE Program Accreditation Standards are ready for implementation. The Standards continue to define quality program practices and assist programs in the process of continuous improvement.

What's NEW?

- There is one set of Standards for all types of early childhood programs birth to five years: Standards for Implementing Quality Early Childhood Programs will be used by all programs serving children birth through five years old – Center-Based Child Care, Head Start, and Public School. All early childhood programs will be rated using the same Indicators.
- Before and After School Only Programs: Standards for Implementing Quality School-Age Child Care will be used by child care programs providing only Before and After School child care.
- Program Standards:
 - ◆ Program Administration and Home and Community Partnership sections contain required documentation. Required documentation identifies program policy, procedures, and family and community engagement.
 - ◆ The Program Operation section is focused on observable evidence. Observable evidence aligns with program policy. Classroom practices reflect best practices rationale and are aligned with program's policies and procedures.

For more information about Maryland Accreditation please contact Vanessa Jones at vanessa.jones1@maryland.gov

Did you know?

- There are 270 MSDE Accredited Child Care, Head Start, and Public School Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten programs.

PAST EVENTS



Parent Cafés in Southern Maryland

Maryland Family Network recently trained 27 people as part of a two-day Strengthening Families Maryland Parent Café Facilitator Training Institute for Southern Maryland. The graduates are now qualified to host Parent Cafés in their communities or organizations. Parent Cafés are an opportunity for parents of very young children to come together for structured, meaningful conversations on topics related to the five Protective Factors which help strengthen families.

The training was open to representatives of organizations in Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties, which serve very young children or their parents. Each trained facilitator or team of facilitators has agreed to host at least three Parent Cafés for parents of children zero to five by December 31. For information about upcoming training in your region, visit marylandfamilynetwork.org.

Judy Center News

Judith P. Hoyer Foundation Celebrates the Judy Centers

On June 27th, the Judith P. Hoyer Foundation sponsored a luncheon celebration at Martin's Crosswinds in Greenbelt to honor Judy Centers which are named in tribute to Congressman Steny H. Hoyer's late wife, Judy. Judy Centers serve children birth through age five and their low-income families with the goal of school readiness. They coordinate high quality early childhood education and comprehensive family support services through collaborative partnerships with community agencies, organizations and businesses to meet the needs of the families they serve.

The event was attended by over 200 people. Mark Shriver, president of Save the Children's Action Network, served as the keynote speaker. Libby Doggett, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Policy and Early Learning from the U.S. Department of Education, also attended and delivered remarks. Cheryl DeAtley, Judy Center Partnerships Specialist from the Maryland State Department of Education, described the hard work faced by Judy Center staff on a daily basis when advocating for families with the most challenging of situations. There are 52 Judy Centers, in Title I school districts, serving over 15,000 young children and families throughout the state of Maryland.



"I was pleased to attend today's luncheon to recognize the outstanding work of Judy Centers across the state of Maryland," said Congressman Hoyer. "Children with Judy Center experience – many of whom already start at a disadvantage – are showing remarkable progress, and that success is directly attributed to the dedication, commitment, and skills of the Judy Center staff. I also thank the Baltimore Community Foundation and its network of donors for their significant contribution to expand the Judy Center network and ensure that even more children in the city can benefit."

Allegany



Allegany County Uses School Greenhouse to Connect with Parents

On March 29th, the Allegany County Judy Center's South Penn Elementary School site partnered with the Allegany County University of Maryland Extension Group to introduce Parent Planting Day. The joint venture harnessed the power of gardening, and a once forgotten school greenhouse on school property, to achieve the educational, social/emotional, and community mission objectives shared by both South Penn Elementary school and the Judy Center. Parents were invited to the school to help their children plant flowers, vegetables, and construct hand-print garden pavers.

In the months following the Parent Planting Day event, the students' efforts took the project in a new direction that allowed for an even greater impact in the community. By bringing the classroom into the greenhouse, students engaged in experiential learning while working together to nurture their crops to maturity. After the students raised their flowers, the marigolds and zinnias were then used in three separate projects: Mother's Day gifts, school flower beds, and a

community outreach project. In addition to using the flowers in the community and the school, the vegetables planted on Parent Planting Day were harvested by the students and used to make a garden fresh meal for their teachers during an end of the year staff appreciation lunch. South Penn Elementary School staff were incredibly grateful for the meal.



Pictured left to right: Ashanti Billings and Zander Ryan-Mills work on harvesting various vegetables to be used as ingredients in a salad for the staff appreciation lunch

Judy Center News

Anne Arundel



Anne Arundel Judy Center Partners with Correctional Center for Parent/Child Reading Program

The Judy Center at Hilltop Elementary School in Anne Arundel County has a special relationship with the local correctional institution. In the fall of 2014, the Judy Center partnered with the Anne Arundel County Public Library and the Ordinance Road Correctional Center to bring a program that encourages reading with inmates and their children. The program, called Open Book, begins before the Judy Center staff even meets the inmates. The correctional center chooses inmates based on behavior, the time period of their stay, and the ages of their children.

The program is divided into three sessions. In the first session, Judy Center staff, library staff, and Ordinance Road staff meet with inmates to go over expectations of the program. They are taught how to bond with their child using children's literature. During the second session, inmates and their children have a joint visit where the parents demonstrate reading skills to their children, do an art activity together, and incorporate singing and finger plays into their time together. The third session is a wrap-up session where inmates and staff process the program. They

write letters home to their children and send a special picture of their time together.



A dad reads to his children during the Open Book program at Ordinance Road Correctional Center.

In the words of Becky Hass, the Programming and Outreach Manager for the Anne Arundel County Public Library, the program is "extremely powerful." The program allows inmates to have a visit with their children, that otherwise would not be allowed. By participating, parents demonstrate the importance of reading to their children. In this program, inmates have recalled their past reading experiences with fond (and sometimes not so fond) memories. One parent even recalled a book that his grandmother read to him as a child, and planned to ask her for that book so he could read it to his children!

Overall, the Open Book program is immensely important and has had a wonderful positive impact for the 27 inmates involved and their 46 children who have participated.



Baltimore City



The Curtis Bay Judy Center and A.M. Cutz Barbershop/Beauty Salon Partner for "Free Haircut Day"

The Curtis Bay Judy Center in Baltimore City understands the importance of engaging all community members to bridge the achievement gap and promote school readiness. To achieve this, the Center has partnered with A.M. Cutz owner, Aisha McCray, to offer free haircuts to Judy Center children as a way to give back. The overall goal of the partnership is to improve students' self-esteem, academic performance

and behavior. In addition to offering free services to children, A.M. Cutz has graciously offered free haircuts and styles to parents that work closely with the Judy Center on workforce development when offered interviews. "It is uplifting to know that there are local businesses that understand our mission and want to do more for the students we all care about," said Cynthia Florez, Judy Center Coordinator.

Judy Center News

Frederick

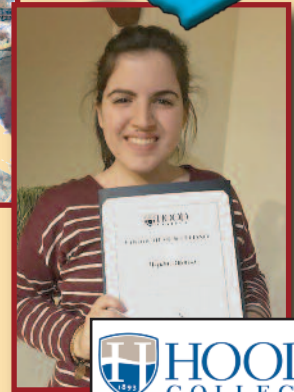


Frederick County Judy Center Volunteer is College Bound!

Megan Alfonso, a recent graduate of Tuscarora High School in Frederick County, has been volunteering every month for the past two years at Hillcrest Elementary with the Judy Center Family Literacy Nights and other school activities. Throughout the school year, Megan reliably spends two to three hours a week of her time assisting with a variety of tasks. Megan comes to help prepare materials, to set up the rooms, assist with signing-in all the participants, serve dinner, provide support to families/children to engage in the learning activities, and even help to clean up after the families have left.

The most important task Megan volunteers to do is to translate the information and activities into Spanish for the many non-English speaking parents/adults who attend these learning and literacy events with their children. One of Megan's favorite things about volunteering is, "helping to interpret for families at the school and making things more efficient." Megan often welcomes families in their native language, as well as English, and reads or interprets information and instructions

to Spanish, so that ALL parents can be fully engaged with their children during the language and literacy activities.



Megan's volunteer time in the community, more than 210 hours to date, has earned her a full tuition scholarship to Hood College! Megan also earned a Meritorious Service Learning Award for Community Service. She is planning to double major in Global Studies and Spanish. It has been an honor having Megan as part of the Judy Center family and her time and commitment is commendable.

Baltimore



New Judy Center in Baltimore County is Off to a Roaring Start

The Judy Center at Hawthorne Elementary School opened on March 21, 2016 with a staff excited to serve young children and families in the Hawthorne area. During the first three months of opening, the Judy Center participated in Family Fitness night, STEM Fair Night, and a Pre-K Picnic. A toy lending library was initiated and is used weekly. Monthly child care trainings were held and joint public school-Head Start teacher professional development opportunities were offered. A validation team was created and the members completed validation training. The Judy Center was thrilled to give away over 200 books to young children and their families in the Hawthorne community. The Judy Center staff is excited about serving young children and their families and the positive changes the Judy Center is being brought to the Hawthorne community.



RESOURCES

Making Access Happen

Did you know that in the 2011-2012 school year, nearly 8,000 preschoolers were suspended nationally, often for relatively minor disruptions and behaviors? When young children do not have access to enriching opportunities they are missing out on experiences that help prepare them for kindergarten.

The *Making Access Happen* (MAH) initiative addresses the goal of narrowing the school readiness gap for young children with disabilities through increased access

and engagement in public and private community-based early care and education programs. Through varying levels of technical assistance and reflective coaching support, with selected birth to kindergarten early care and education providers, MAH builds staff capacity to implement evidence-based practices in inclusive early childhood settings. The MAH Toolkit expands and sustains this technical assistance through a repository of supports, learning modules, and resources designed to provide a personalized, interactive learning experience for practitioners, providers, and families. It is designed to allow users to tailor their own toolkit and their

own learning within the toolkit, based upon their current experience and need.

The initial MAH Toolkit learning experience focuses content, strategies, and tools around the provision of positive behavior supports. Designed to support practitioners in addressing behavior challenges with young children, each of the behavior support segments uses a video scenario of a challenging behavior to

**“Just Enough,
Just in Time,
Just for You”**

anchor the learning, discussion, and resources that follow. The user can then personalize their own experience by engaging with one or more segments as they consider what information to explore, how much information to engage with, and what tools and strategies to adopt in their experiences with young children. Additional learning experiences coming soon will focus on Reflective Coaching, Developmentally Appropriate Practices, and Child/Family Authentic Assessment. Begin your personalized online learning experience at <http://www.makingaccesshappen.com>



We're excited to announce that we have a brand new blog section!



The DECD Blog will be updated monthly with unique content that provides actionable advice and tips to early childhood care providers and parents.

We have a few posts up, like this one that is all about how young children communicate.

Communication 101 - What's That Kid Trying to Say?

It's late afternoon and your ten-month-old is rubbing their eyes and just will not stop crying.

The number of words in English or any other known language that this child can speak: ZERO.

But is this baby communicating with you?

Most parents would say "yes" - this baby is telling you "Please turn off The Wheels on the Bus, I do not need 'enrichment' right now. What I need is a nap, thank you very much."

Simple, right?

Even though very young children do not yet have the verbal vocabulary they'll eventually develop, they can still be very effective communicators. Just how effective they are, though, depends in large part on you... Are you looking for their communication? Are you noticing the patterns in their communication? Trying to understand your child's cues, even in their first two years, can have a huge impact in promoting both their social and communication development.

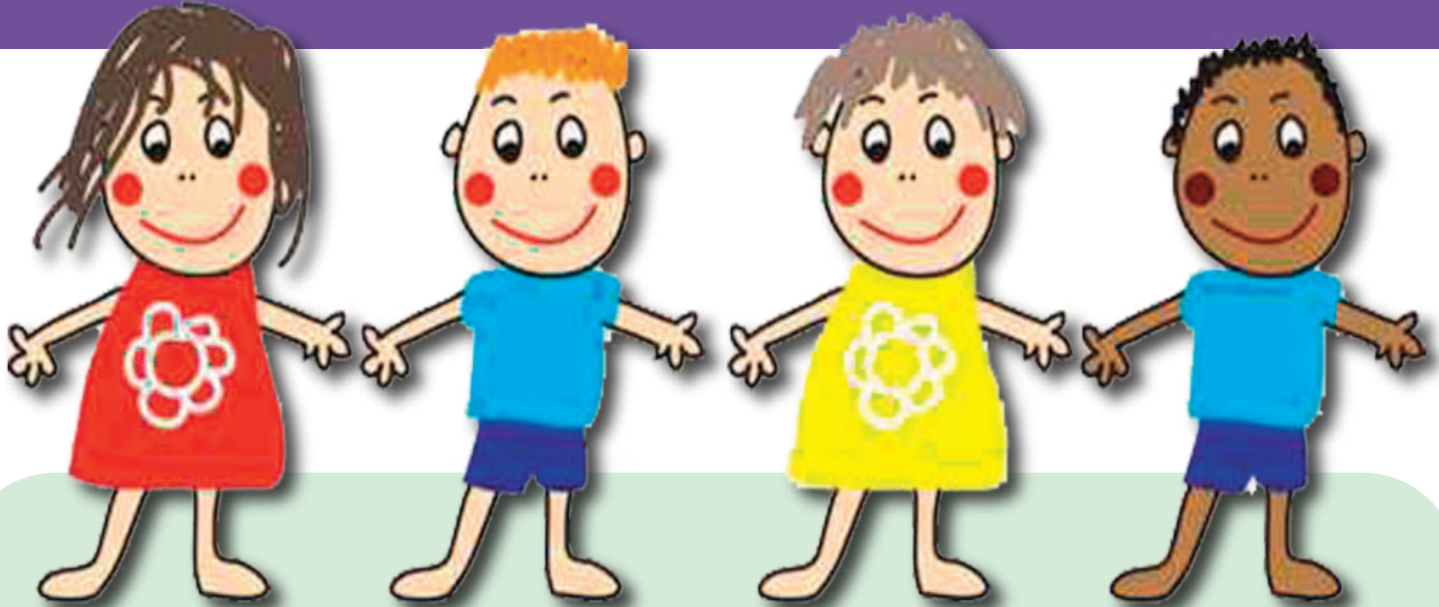
In a child's first year, crying is clearly (and sometimes painfully) their communication tool of choice. That said, if you pay close attention, you might notice that your child has slightly different cries for different situations - having a wet diaper, being hungry, needing a nap. But also think about all the other ways your baby communicates with you. A smile is

an obvious (and delightful) one. But they likely also have other facial expressions that signal to you that they're frustrated or curious or excited. And a baby's gaze can tell you that they're interested in exploring the person or thing that's caught their gaze. Likewise, when a baby breaks its gaze with you and looks away, it may be an implicit criticism of your personal grooming... but it's more likely to mean they're either over-stimulated or tired. And babies communicate with us through their gestures - when they reach for people or objects or pick things up.

All of that and they never said a word!

Read the rest of this blog post and other posts at earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/blog

Early Learning Assessment Update



A volunteer group of child care and Head Start providers recently completed an implementation pilot test of the new Early Learning Assessment (ELA). A survey collected from the group is being used to provide feedback on implementing the ELA and use of the app. Information from the survey will be incorporated into a follow-up professional devel-

opment "refresher" (2-3 hour webinar or face-to-face) for ELA Trainers. Trainers will receive updated information on the use of the ELA app and the new features of the online system in the late summer or early fall. Dates will be published on the MSDE Early Childhood site <http://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org>

Benefits of Using the Early Learning Assessment

- ▶ You can better understand what a child already knows or does well so you can better plan instruction to take them to the next step. You will become familiar with what a child should be learning as they become ready to enter Kindergarten in the future.
- ▶ You can measure a child's growth over points of time, which gives you more information for planning your program and to share with the child's family.
- ▶ You can use the Early Learning Assessment to meet some of the requirements for Level 5 in Maryland EX-CELS as well as to meet accreditation standards.

Continued on Pg. 13

Benefits of Using the Early Learning Assessment

- ▶ Your cost for training will be minimal since most of the training, and the full cost of the kit is paid for by MSDE.
- ▶ You will have no costs in implementing the ELA in your program as you will have access to the assessment online and subsequent online professional development is provided at no cost.
- ▶ You will better understand children with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) as Special Educators use the ELA for gathering and structuring information.

Communication with Parents and Schools

- ▶ The ELA provides information to teachers and parents of a child's progress in Maryland's seven (7) different domains of learning.
- ▶ The online system allows you to see, print and share information that shows a child's growth over a period of time. This is great information to share at parent teacher conferences.
- ▶ Child care providers can choose which skills and in what domain(s) to assess based on the needs of the child in your program.
- ▶ The ELA can be completed online – all of the child's scores can be entered on a computer or tablet device. A paper version is also available.
- ▶ All of the assessment items on the ELA can be completed by observing the child during your regular classroom activities.
- ▶ The online system will also provide you with many useful professional development resources to use for planning learning activities and for addressing the individual needs of children. There is even a Pinterest page!

If you are interested in learning how to use the new Early Learning Assessment in your program, Maryland Family Network (MFN), through a grant with the Maryland State Department of Education, provides low-cost Early Learning Assessment training and a free Early Learning Assessment kit. The kit contains the paper version of the formative assessment materials. The assessment materials are also available online. If you are interested in taking the ELA training, please contact Jennifer Lentz at MFN jlentz@marylandfamilynetwork.org. Participants will earn Core of Knowledge hours for the 12-hour training. Information and dates for training will be publicized later. The Early Learning Assessment (ELA) will have many benefits to child care providers. It is a formative

assessment, meaning it has activities that you can use that will help you identify a child's skills, knowledge and behaviors between the ages of 36 and 72 months. You can then plan instruction that matches where a child currently is developmentally as well as plan additional support for children who may be behind what is expected for a child around that age. The ELA is aligned to <http://earlychildhood.maryland-publicschools.org/prek-grade-2/maryland-early-learning-framework/maryland-early-learning-standards> "Maryland Early Learning Standards" in seven domains which establish the expectations for all children as the foundation for school readiness and life-long success.

STEM in a Backpack: Teaching Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math in the Great Outdoors



Through a generous grant from the W.R. Grace Foundation, The Baltimore City Child Care Resource Center has developed an outdoor STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics) education curriculum. Currently, fifteen participants are visiting three parks in Baltimore City (Clyburn, Herring Run, and Gwynns Falls) where staff are teaching the participants how to

incorporate STEM activities and using the great outdoors as a classroom. Child care providers learn to build STEM backpacks filled with the tools needed to explore nature. The backpacks include items such as prisms, bug keepers, magnifiers, and a mortar and pestle. Additional training opportunities are available at www.bccrc.org/

Friday Night Stargazing

See the Moon, planets, and stars through our historic and now computer controlled Alvan Clark & Sons 8" refracting telescope at the Observatory on the roof of the Maryland Science Center.

Friday admission to the Observatory is free (does not include access to the Museum).

Summer is the perfect time to get outside and gaze at the stars. The sky is clear, the weather is warm, and downtown Baltimore is perfect for star gazing evenings.

The Observatory is open to the public for stargazing every Friday night, weather permitting. Phone 410-545-2999 after 5:00 PM on Fridays to find out if the Observatory will be open that night. The Observatory is open to the outdoors, so please dress appropriately. If visiting as a large group (20-plus people), please notify the Science Center at least a week ahead of time.

If you are interested in sharing more about space with your children, these are two new series worth checking out:

- Across the Universe by Kate Riggs (Includes Asteroids, Comets, Galaxies, Moons, Planets, The Sun)
- Objects in Space by Ruth Owen (Includes Spacecraft, Space Stations, Space Garbage, Satellites, Rovers, Probes)

If you're looking for something science related to do during the day, the Science Center also has a special place just for kids 0-8 years old. The Kids Room is a space dedicated to young children and learning through play.

Exhibit highlights include:

- ◆ An area for kids under age two
- ◆ Large water play area
- ◆ Undersea world with periscope and submarine theme
- ◆ Pneumatic messaging system, streetscape, and giant pinscreen

Every weekday morning the Kids Room is completely field trip free until 10:30am, and on Thursdays they are field trip free until 11:30am.



On Fridays, enter through the Key Highway Entrance around the back of the building (the Group Entrance). Chesapeake Children's Museum



Workshops

Tucked away in more than five acres of land at the head of Spa Creek, this hands-on museum teaches kids all about the Chesapeake Bay. Peek at wildlife through the

Bay Window or build a city in the Hard Hat area. The Underground Railroad Trail explains how runaway slaves depended on nature to survive in their quest for freedom.

School Age & Toddlers

Creek Critters

Thursdays, 10:30am

Parents and children alike will enjoy learning about the local environment with indoor and outdoor activities (weather permitting). See what critters live in our woodlands and creek. Share stories, songs, games and crafts. This program is free with admission. All ages.



Art and Story Time

Fridays, 10:30-11:30am

The museum staff is eager to share their passion for great children's literature and creative visual expression with our youngest visitors. Children ages two to five-years-old and their accompanying adults can share books, flannel board stories, puppets, and acting out stories along with related art and craft activities. Free with admission.



CCM Workshops to Go

Instead of arranging a field trip, you can have the museum come to you! Call or email to inquire about workshops for your class, youth group, birthday party or community event. Telephone: 410-990-1993 or email: info@theccm.org

25 Silopanna Road
Annapolis, MD 21403
Phone: 410-990-1993
Admission \$5 for ages 1 & up



Division of Early Childhood Development
Office of Child Care - J1014 / 200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201-2595

PRSR STD
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
BALTIMORE, MD
PERMIT NO. 7873

© Maryland State Department of Education
All Rights Reserved / Published August 2016



Upcoming Conferences

FALL Early Childhood Conference: The Building Blocks of Mathematics

November 12, 2016 8am - 4pm

Where: **Wor-Wic Community College**

Brought to you through the
collaboration of the following
organizations:

MDAEYC-Eastern Shore Chapter

Lower Shore Child Care Resource Center

Wor-Wic Community College

Somerset County Judy Center

**For more information contact
Lower Shore Child Care Resource
Center at
410-543-6650.**

Carousel Oceanfront Hotel and Condos, Ocean City, Maryland

Maryland State
Family Child Care Association
24th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

October 14-15, 2016

**Join MSFCCA for a conference
filled with education, networking
and friends.**

Don't miss out on this fun, refreshing,
inspiring weekend where you can
receive up to 12 hours of training,
including 10 hours of
Core of Knowledge training.

For more info visit
<http://www.msfccca.org>
www.msfccca.org
or email
<mailto:jacqueline.n.grant@gmail.com>
[jacqueline.n.grant@gmail.com.](mailto:jacqueline.n.grant@gmail.com)



A publication from the
Maryland State Department of Education

Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

Andrew R. Smarick
President, Maryland State Board of Education

Larry Hogan
Governor

Elizabeth Kelley
Acting Assistant State Superintendent
Division of Early Childhood Education

Alexis D. Washington
Editor-in-Chief

The Maryland State Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, creed, gender identity and expression, genetic information, marital status, disability, national origin, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs.

For more information about the contents of this document, contact:

Maryland State Department of Education
Division of Early Childhood Development
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

Phone: 410-767-0335 • Toll Free: 1-877-605-1539
410.333.6442 (TTY/TDD) • Fax: 410-333-6226

www.MarylandPublicSchools.org

Join The Conversation!

 <https://www.facebook.com/MdPublicSchools>  <https://twitter.com/MdPublicSchools>  <https://www.youtube.com/user/msdety>