February 2009

The Childcare Professional PERIENC

A Quarterly Journal for Childcare Providers Discussing Legal, Administrative & Professional Issues

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An In depth Look at whether Teachers in the Early Care and Education Field can be classified as Exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

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FLSA: Analyzing the Teacher's Exemption

By Jason D. Dalton, Esq.

Originally passed in 1938, the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) is the primary federal legislation establishing national wage and hour standards. The FLSA was two exempt categories in which a daycare crafted at a time when the nation was just teacher may fit, the "learned professional recovering from the great depression, and exemption," and the "teacher exemption" was designed as a means to establish a The learned professional exemption is maximum number of jobs offering a mini- more of a general category which is not mum amount of pay. The Act functions to specific to teachers and includes any emprotect the working class from overwork playee who meets certain minimum reand underpay by providing rights, which quirements regarding the employees duties can not be waived, to a minimum wage and salary. The teacher exemption, on the and a premium pay rate at time and one- other hand, has somewhat lax requirehalf the regular rate of pay for all hours ments regarding the employee's duties and worked over 40 hours in a workweek.

Although the FLSA mandates that most viable option for most child "executive, administrative, and profes- care providers. The following is a brief of the white collar exceptions.

It has been nearly four years since the regulations defining the exemptions to the tion" FLSA have been revised. In this time, many regulations have been answered. issue, however, which continues to confuse quirements must be met. 1) The teacher under what circumstances do teachers in than \$455 a week. 2) The teacher's pri daycare qualify as exempt from the FLSA?

Introduction

As the law currently stands there are salary, but is limited only to teachers em-Ever since its enactment, the FLSA has ployed in "educational establishments" exempted certain classes of "white collar" Although according to its name it would workers from the pay requirements re- seem logical that the "teacher exemption" quired by the Act. The theory behind leav- would be most applicable to teachers in ing "executive, administrative, and profes- child care, its strict definition of what qualisional" employees out of Act was that these fies as an "educational establishment" management-type workers were capable of leaves the exemption inapplicable to most protecting themselves from exploitation programs, leaving the more generalized through their own personal marketability. "Learned Professional Exemption" as the

sional" employees are exempt from the analysis of the applicability of each to requirements of the FLSA, it has been left teachers employed in the day care setting, to the Department of Labor to establish and is designed only to provide the reader workable definitions of these classes. In with a general familiarity of the two exemp-August of 2004 the regulations governing tions, child care providers are encouraged the FLSA were updated in an attempt to, to seek the advise of a local attorney prior inter alia, modernize and clarify the limits to making any decisions regarding a specific employees exempt status. \

I. The "Learned Professional Exemp-

In order for a teacher to qualify as an questions regarding interpretation of the exempt employee under the "learned pro-One fessional" exception to the FLSA three remembers of the child care community is, must be paid on a salary basis not less

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mary duty must be either imparting knowledge, or some other type of work which is intellectual rather than manual in nature. 3) The job being performed by the teacher must require "advanced knowledge in the field of science or learning" which is "customarily acquired by a pro- edge in the field of science or learning" which is longed course of specialized intellectual instruction."

The Salary Requirement

order for an employee to qualify as exempt from the FLSA requiring the consistent exercise of discretion and judgas a learned professional, the employee in question must ment as distinguished from performance of routine menbe paid a minimum of \$455 per week on a salary basis. tal, manual, mechanical or physical work" Additionally, Unlike an hourly employee's whose pay may vary from the requirement that the knowledge be "customarily acweek to week depending on how many hours the em-quired by a prolonged course of specialized intellectual playee worked that week, salaried employees regularly (on instruction" restricts the exemption to professions where a weekly or less frequent basis) receive a predetermined amount of money constituting all or part of the employee's for entrance into the profession. The indicator that an emcompensation. Moreover, this base compensation ployee meets this requirement is possession of an approamount, which must be \$455 a week or greater, may not priate academic degree. Conversely, section 541.301(d) be subject to reduction because of variations in the quality further clarifies that "the learned professional exemption is or quantity of the work performed.

The Primary Duty Requirement

Second, the teacher's primary duty must be either imparting knowledge, or some other type of work which is ing position at issue must emphasize academic instruction most important duty that an employee performs. Determi- regarding the substance and implementation of a lesson nation of an employee's primary duty must be based on all the facts in a particular case, with the major emphasis on the character of the employee's job as a whole. Factors to consider when determining the primary duty of an employee include, but are not limited to, the relative importance of the exempt duties as compared with other types of duties; the amount of time spent performing exempt work; the employee's relative freedom from direct supervision; and the relationship between the employee's salary and the wages paid to other employees for the kind of nonexempt work performed by the employee." "The amount of time spent performing exempt work can be a useful guide in determining whether exempt work is the primary duty of an employee. Thus, an employee who spends more than 50 percent of his or her time performing exempt work will generally satisfy the primary duty requirement."

In the context of teachers in child care, this first requirement basically means that the employee's main purpose at the center needs to be instruction. Therefore, those employees, whose primary job function consists of, supervising children, engaging in manual labor, performing clerical or administrative tasks, or caring for the physical needs of children would not fit into this exemption. The fifty percent rule is a good rule of thumb to use here. If the employee spends more than half of his/her time actually instructing children, then they most likely would satisfy the primary duty requirement. If not, then he/she probably would not be considered a "teacher" for the purposes of the FLSA exemptions and should to be paid over-

The Advanced Education Requirement

Finally, the position must require "advanced knowl-"customarily acquired by a prolonged course of specialized intellectual instruction." Work "requiring advanced knowledge" essentially means "work which is predomi-The fist requirement is relatively self explanatory. In nantly intellectual in character, and which includes work specialized academic training is a standard prerequisite not available for occupations that customarily may be performed with only the general knowledge acquired by an academic degree in any field.

In applying this last standard to child care, the teachintellectual rather than manual in nature. The term as opposed to simple custodial care of the children. The "primary duty" is defined as the "principal main, major, or position should allow the teacher a degree of discretion

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different categories of teachers, some ment for teachers under this exemp- ciated with the program. of which meet these requirements, tion This too is different from many of and some of which do not (such as the other "learned professional" exlead teachers and teachers aids), it is emptions which require an "advanced quirement important to establish two separate knowledge in the field of science or teachers who qualify as "learned pro- lectual instruction." fessionals"

Conclusion

that teachers in the child care setting may qualify as exempt employees un- which seems to be interpreted fairly seemingly broad definition of der the general "professional exemp- rigidly by the Department of Labor tion" to the minimum wage and over- when considered in light of child care. time requirements of the fair labor standards act. However in order to qualify a number of prerequisites must be met. The teacher in question must teachers exemption is that the embe paid on a salary basis, not less ployee's primary duty must be teach- those day or residential schools that than \$455.00 a week. The teacher's ing, tutoring, instructing, or lecturing provide elementary or secondary eduor must otherwise be intellectual in This requirement utilizes essentially the The Federal Regulations go on to nature, and the position must allow same definition of "primary duty" as is state "that under the laws of most the teacher to exercise discretion in utilized in the general professional States, such education includes the the performance of her duties. Fi- employee exemption addressed earlier curriculums in grades 1 through 12; nally, as a minimum, the position in this article. As discussed above, the under many it includes also the intromust require a 4 year degree from an term "primary duty" means the ductory programs in kindergarten. accredited college or university in a "principal main, major, or most im- Such education in some States may specific field.

II. The "Teachers" Exemption

In addition to the general professional exemption discussed above, teachers are also specifically listed under the DOL regulations as a class of professionals exempt from the minimum wage and overtime requirements of the FLSA. To determine if an employee qualifies as a "teacher" under this exemption a two part test is used; 1) the employee's "primary duty must be teaching, tutoring, instructing, or lecturing in the activity of imparting knowledge" and 2) the teacher must be employed in an "educational establishment." Both aspects of the test must be met before an employee qualifies for an exemption to the overtime requirements of the act. It is im-

The Primary Duty Requirement

portant duty that an employee per-

portant to note that unlike many of the forms." Therefore, in order to fulfill plan. Lastly, the teaching position in other FLSA exemptions, such as the fist requirement of the teachers auestion must require at a minimum, more generalized learned professional exemption, the majority of an ema 4 year degree from an accredited exemption discussed above, there is ployee's actual job responsibilities college or university in a specific field no salary requirement under the must involve instruction, as opposed such as ECE, Elementary Education or teachers exemption. Furthermore, to caring for the children's physical a related field. If a center employs there is no per se education require- needs or any other manual work asso-

"Educational Establishment" Re-

The second requirement of the job titles/ job descriptions in order to learning customarily acquired by a teacher exemption is that the teacher preserve the exempt status of those prolonged course of specialized intel- must be employed by an "educational What distin- establishment." Unlike the primary auishes this specific exemption from duty test which evaluates the nature of the more generalized professional a specific employee's position, this exemption however is the requirement second test looks at the nature of the To summarize, it seems apparent that the teachers be employed by an employer's child care program as a "educational establishment" a term whole. The applicable law provides a "educational establishment" covering "an elementary or secondary school system, an institution of higher education, or other educational establish-The first requirement under the ment." Under the Act, elementary and secondary schools are defined as primary duty must involve instruction in the activity of imparting knowledge. cation as determined under State law.

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CHILD CARE PROVIDER RETAINER PROGRAM

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establishment" includes special schools mination. for mentally or physically disabled or secondary or other. Finally the Regula- whether it will qualify as an educational in this regard. tions state that no distinction is drawn establishment under the FLSA. A simple between public or private schools for the way for many child care providers to purposes of the exemption.

open meaning of "educational establish- offering programs which are licensed by requirements found in the general proment", recent guidance from the US their State's Department of Education or fessional exemption, the US Department Department of Labor ("DOL") suggests a equivalent will likely qualify as Educa- of Labor's ridged interpretation of the decidedly narrow application of this defi-tional Establishments, whereas Child term "educational establishment" makes nition when evaluating pre-elementary Care providers licensed by other state the teacher's exemption unavailable to Administrator opinion letter from the Educational Establishments. In the event licensed by their State Board of Educa-Wage and Hour Division, the DOL sug- a child care provider offers some progested that a daycare center in which grams that are considered part of its are able to meet this definition of educathe teachers spend the majority of their State's definition of elementary or secon-tional establishment, the teacher exemptime teaching children between the ages dary education, and other programs tion will be available to employee's of 3-5, and which is not licensed by the which are not, it seems evident that only whose primary duty in the program in-State Department of Education, would those teachers in the former classroom volves actual instruction. Finally, benot qualify as an "educational establish- may qualify for the exemption while the cause of the determination of whether a ment" under the Act. In reaching this teachers in the latter will not. position the opinion letter applied only the portion of the definition pertaining to this simplified test is not without excep-relatively complicated and varies from elementary and secondary school sys- tions. For example, in some states Head state to state, and because the DOL tems, concluding that absent information Start programs have been held to qualify imposes stiff penalties for violations of to the contrary, the fact that a program as "educational establishments" under the FLSA, child care providers are enis not licensed by its State Department of their State's Unemployment Compensa-Education indicates that it is not consid- tion law even though there is no requireered part of the elementary or secondary ment that they be licensed by the local exempt under this provision. school system under state law, and thus Department of Education. As discussed

is not an "educational establishment" above, the

make this determination is to look at Nonetheless, despite the seemingly their state license. Child care providers lacks the salary and minimum education In a recent Non-agencies will most likely not qualify as the majority of child care providers not

also include nursery school programs in under the FLSA. In light of this guid- definition of an "educational establishelementary education" When evaluat- ance, it is apparent that the DOL consid- ment" as it applies to the FLSA hinges on ing whether a post-secondary school fits ers the dispositive issue in evaluating how each state defines education. It within the definition of "educational es- whether a program qualifies as an seems apparent therefore that Head tablishment" the Federal Regulations "educational establishment" under the Start programs in these states may gualconsiders factors "includ[ina] whether Act to be whether the program offered ify as "educational establishments" for the school is licensed by a state agency by the center fits within its State's defini- the purposes of the teachers exemption responsible for the states educational tion of elementary education. More- to the FLSA. Additionally in a number of system or accredited by a nationally over, it is also clear that DOL looks to states the boundaries between what the recognized accrediting organization for the degree to which a program is regu- state considers to gualify as "elementary career schools." The Regulations also lated by its State Department of Educa- education" is not so clear. In any event, state that the term "other educational tion [or equivalent], in making this deter- because of the potentially harsh penalties imposed for violating the standards A Child care provider, therefore, of the FLSA, child care providers are gifted children regardless of any classifi- must look to the law of the State in encouraged to seek the advice of a local cation of such schools as elementary, which it is located in order to determine attorney before making any conclusions

Conclusion

Although the teacher's exemption tion. However for those providers who program qualifies as an educational Although seemingly easy to apply, establishment under state law can be couraged to seek the advise of local counsel before classifying employees as

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT RESOURCES FOR CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

- ◆ Model Personnel Policy Manual for Child Care Agencies: 3rd Ed.
 - Model Parent Handbook for Child Care Agencies
 - ◆ Model Forms for Child Care Agencies
 - Current Issues in Child



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Personal Appearance in the Workplace

Bv: Dawn K. Martini

of the most frequent issues Directors and Owners want skirt, so are the male employees. We recommend being to discuss relates to their employee's personal appear- gender neutral in this policy to avoid problems in this ance at work. With the ever relaxing standards for per- area. sonal appearance in our society, it is not surprising that this issue is becoming a problem for employers. As with commodations to employees who, by religious mandate, other employment issues we have addressed in this are required to or prohibited from dressing in certain monthly newsletter; personal appearance seems to be a ways. For example, an employer may require that emgenerational problem. For employers to get a handle ployees wear khaki pants or shorts to work. If an Orthoon this issue it is important that there be a clearly de- dox Jewish women is employed, and presents written fined employment policy that reflects the overall mission documentation from her religious leader that she is and corporate culture of the program. In the majority of mandated to wear a long skirt, the employer must acinstances, where the employer and employee are work- commodate her. This employee would be allowed to ing under the "at-will" doctrine, employers are free to set wear a khaki long skirt. Further, the employer may reany and all standards they wish with regard to how em- quire this employee to wear pants or shorts under the ployees dress in the workplace.

ance Policy as opposed to a Dress Code Policy. Since employee's religious beliefs are accommodated and the employers find that they have to address more than what agency's needs are met. Likewise, if an agency employs an employee wears, the title "Personal Appearance" an Islamic woman, it is likely that she will be required to becomes more appropriate and all encompassing, have her head covered. Once written documentation When drafting your Personal Appearance Policy we find from the religious leader is presented to the employer it easiest to begin at the head and work down to the feet outlining this mandate, the employer must allow the emtaking into consideration each body area so as to leave ployee to wear the head covering. The accommodanothing out.

major issues for many programs. For safety as well as employees. professional appearance reasons you may decide to safety risk. A child can pull a chain and cut an em- this policy be sure to look at the unique nature of your ployee or a child can be scratched by a ring. It is impor- employees and address all the issues that have been tant to be clear and to enforce any policy decision you driving you crazy. make across the board for all staff in a similar employment classification.

the infants, although it was not strong enough to kill the ent badge. nurses or their family members. Bacteria was present hibiting fake nails will help employees keep them clean.

Employers should be careful when drafting this pol-

icy so as not to discriminate against the employees When working with agencies across the nation one based upon gender. If women are permitted to wear a

Employers will be required to provide religious acskirt if the pant/short policy is to encourage the em-In general, we prefer to call this a Personal Appear- ployee to get down on the floor with the children. The tions for employees with religious mandates will not ne-Today, jewelry, tattoos and piercings have become gate your personal appearance policy for all of the other

This policy may need to address issues like: personal prohibit employees from wearing jewelry of any kind in hygiene, strong fragrances or perfumes, the use of fabric the classroom and/or from having any visible tattoos. softener and the like. We are aware of a program that Ear rings, nose rings, etc. have very small parts that can was forced to address the wearing of appropriate undercause a child to choke. Other jewelry can also be a garments such as bras and underwear. When drafting

With all that said, we are proponents of having an agency uniform. The typical child care uniform would You should consider fingernail length as well. Some consist of a polo type shirt (long or short sleeved) and employees prefer very long fingernails. There are colo- khaki pants/shorts. There are several reasons for our nies of germs that live comfortably under fingernails and, position. First, the uniform sets the employees apart in addition, longer nails tend to rip through rubber from other adults in the center. This creates an air of gloves. Not very long ago a Pediatrics Ward in the professionalism. Secondly, parents and children can Northwestern part of our country made the news. Appar- clearly identify the adults responsible in the center should ently, the ward had a very high rate of infant mortality. there be a safety issue or emergency situation. Finally, After several months of research it was discovered that a employees can quickly identify non-agency adults, and bacteria living under the nails of some of the nurses was proceed to escort them off the property if they are not the cause of the infections and ultimately the deaths of identified in some other manner, such as a visitor or par-

You will need to set standards that are acceptable to under the nails of nurses with both real and fake nails so your agency's philosophy and work environment. Once the issue was related to the length and cleanliness under again, in an "at-will" environment, the employer has the the nails. Requiring fingernails to be short and/or pro-right to decide what is considered acceptable concerning appearance.



2009 Cape May Training Seminars

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Ronald V. McGuckin and Associates is pleased to have Ronald V. McGuckin, Esq., Dawn K. Martini, BS, Janice A. Nieliwocki, BS, and Jason D. Dalton, Esq. presenting for the 2009 Cape May Training Seminars. This team of presenters has over 55 years of combined experience in the Child Care Industry and provides a comprehensive view of the everyday issues facing Early Care and Education Professionals.

For more information on our presenters go to **child providerlaw.com** and view the Presenter Biographies.

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June 23, 24 and 25

Long Range Strategic Planning is a process whereby the Owner/BOD of an agency set out to chart the course of the business. The agency's position is reviewed and goals are set in relation to various indicators including: Agency Mission, Financial Stabillity, Range of Services Provided, Facilities, Population Served, and Administrative/HR Systems.

Participants will learn about the Strategic Planning Process. Participants will be engaged in goal setting discussion and will be given strategies for how to assemble a Strategic Planning Team, promote the open flow of ideas and writing a Strategic Plan.

SESSION THREE

Current Issues for Child Care Professionals

July 21, 22 and 23

Supervision of Children in the Early Childhood Classroom
Court Orders and the Release of Children
Media Effects on the Young Child
Kindergarten...Ready or Not Here I Come!
Encouraging Professionalism

Comfidentiality
Accommodation Issues in the Early Childhood Setting
Come on Let's Read! (Literature in the Classroom)

Introducing Two new topics related to Male Roles in ECE: "No Men in My Center" and Inside a Male

Lead Classroom

OWT NOISSES

Employment Issues and Strategies for the Advanced Administrator

June 30, July 1 and 2

Fostering a Harmonious Workplace Tackling New Trends in Employee Issues: Cyberspace Identities, "Helicoptering" Parent/Spouses, Cell Phones and Internet Access in the Classroom, Fashion/Tattoo and

Jewelry Trends
Navigating Wage and Hour Laws: Are Teachers
in ECE Exempt under the FLSA?

Unemployment Compensation Issues and Definitions related to the Early Childhood Industry Employee Onboarding...a new definition of New

Employee Orientation
ADA, Workers Compensation and FMLA...The Bernuda
Triangle of Leave/Accommodation Issues

SESSION FOUR

Your Agency's Personnel Policies and Parent Handbook

July 28, 29 and 30

Participants will be engaged in Drafting and Editing their Agency's Personnel Policy Manual and/or Parent Handbook during this seminar. Participants are asked to bring their current Personnel Policy Manual, Parent Handbook and a laptop computer. A laptop computer is not required for participation. As part of the registration fee, participants may choose to receive either the Model Personnel Policy Manual for Child Care Agencies: FOURTH EDITION or Model Parent Handbook

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2009 Cape May Training Seminars

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Cape May Training Seminars

FATHER INVOLVEMENT: Understanding the Benefits & Overcoming Barriers

By: Janice Nieliwocki

ing on an active role in raising their children.

has evolved and with it, the role of fatherhood. Although if strife exists within the family, or if it is a separated famthe traditional nuclear family of mother, father and chil- ily, the mother-father dynamics can certainly have a dren, still remains, we continue to see a rise in the num- negative impact on father involvement. In addition, if ber of non-traditional families. The unsettling result of both parents work outside the home, fathers will often these socio-demographic changes is that there's a take a more active role in child care out of sheer necesgreater likely hood that today's children will spend part sity. Interestingly, studies show that mothers themselves of their life living apart from their father than their coun- are perhaps the biggest influence as to the roll the father terparts of yesteryear. Although many unmarried par- takes. The mother often serves as "gatekeeper", either ents work to raise their children together, research shows encouraging the father in child care (and thus opening that father involvement under these circumstances is the gate for involvement), or criticizing the job the father sometimes minimal.

Regardless of whether the family is intact or not, father range of positive outcomes for the children.

These positive effects can be seen early in life. One the father may be unaware of his paternity. study showed that infants of highly involved fathers were skills.

past these early years.

school prepared to learn, tend to be more motivated in to cross. the classroom and show higher academic achievement achievement and career success.

ment. Involved dads seem to be better able to cope with oped with the male's perspective in mind. stress and report feeling more competent. Mothers also benefit from father involvement as they report less stress and take inventory of the barriers to that end, we must and overall higher life satisfaction. When fathers are ac- also recognize that we, the child care community, are in tively involved in the family, there is better communica- a unique position to foster father involvement. In protion among family members and thus a greater sense of moting father involvement in our programs, we ultimately family commitment and unity.

Undoubtedly father involvement is beneficial, however Never before has so much emphasis been placed on societal barriers exist that may deter fathers from getting "fathering." In recent years, sociologists have spent involved in their child's early care. The family relationcountless hours researching the father's role within the ship is perhaps the most influential and can serve as a family and an increasing number of fathers are now tak- catalyst or a hindrance to father involvement. Not surprising, if the overall family context is positive, then fa-Undoubtedly, the American family as we once knew it thers are more likely to be involved. On the other hand, does (and thus closing the gate).

There are many personal reasons fathers often don't involvement in childhood years is critical to the develop- get involved with raising their young children. It may be ment of the child. Whether it is early care within the the father's fear or perceived inadequacies concerning home, or involvement in the child care center, the value child care, time constraints, beliefs that child rearing is a father's input brings cannot be underestimated. Re- primarily the mother's job, monetary problems and/or search clearly shows that when fathers are regularly and substance abuse. In separated families, the father may frequently involved with their children there are a wide no longer live in close proximity to the child, thus making involvement challenging at best. In still other situations,

Cultural and generational expectations of fathers and more cognitively competent at 6 months, and by 1 year their role can also present barriers to involvement. The continued to have higher cognitive functioning. Another role a father plays within the family can be very strictly study showed that toddlers of highly involved fathers had dictated by cultural norms. Different cultures have differa more diverse vocabulary and better overall verbal ent ideas concerning the meaning of fatherhood which often guides their behavior and subsequent father in-The resulting benefits of father involvement extend far volvement, or lack thereof. Often, cultural and generational definitions of woman's work vs. man's work create Children with involved dads are more likely to enter well defined lines which are difficult for men and women

Pre-existing attitudes and biases often deter father inoverall. Studies also show that children of involved fa- volvement. We in child care, the very people who should thers have higher self-esteem and demonstrate social be supportive of fathers being involved, often create barcompetency at an earlier age. Over the long term these riers because we continue to focus on mothers as the children are more likely to have higher economic primary care givers. How many times has a concern arisen with a child in your care and your first response is But the benefits are not just limited to the children. "I'll have to talk to mom about that"? In addition, staff Fathers themselves profit from being involved with their may be ambivalent about father involvement and in children as they benefit from a secure father-child attach- many cases our programs and activities are not devel-

As we acknowledge the benefits of father involvement Continued on page 9

...continued from page 8

help to facilitate father's involvement in everyday care and support of their children. Child care programs that actively incorporate fatherhood involvement strategies have significantly greater father participation. Some strategies that have proven successful include:

- Setting specific father involvement goals
- Completing a needs and motivations assessment for fathers
- Taking a multi-disciplinary and culturally sensitive approach
- Providing outreach, including multiple recruitment methods
- Working to build relationships with fathers through partnership and patience
- Providing opportunities for engagement at various levels (i.e. individual, both parents, family, community)

It is crucial to create a culture of inclusion by making your center "father friendly." Strategies to help foster a "father friendly" environment include:

- Identifying significant male role models
- Providing training for staff regarding father involvement

- Recognizing and understanding father's legal rights when dealing with custody situations
- Actively recruiting fathers to get involved
- Scheduling activities after work hours or on weekends when fathers are more likely to be able to attend
- Sponsoring programs/activities that teach fathers how to help their children learn
- Offering activities that speak to Father/Male Specific Topics
- Placing pictures of fathers with their children around the day care center
- Educating fathers on the importance of their roles in their children's development.
- Letting dads know you appreciate them and their involvement!

The importance of men in their children's lives cannot be underestimated. Recognizing the benefits of father involvement, striving to overcome the barriers, and "going the extra mile' to encourage fathers to get involved can only help to strengthen the families we serve and will benefit the children to whom we dedicate our professional lives.

CHILDREN'S BOOK CORNER

By: Janice Nieliwocki

Not often have I walked into a book store and been so captivated by a children's book that I couldn't wait to share it with others. But so was the case with the book <u>Have You Filled A Bucket Today? A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids.</u> Written by Carol McCloud and illustrated by David Messing, this book teaches a very powerful lesson about the value of kindness.

The story begins with the simple premise that everyone in the world has a bucket to fill and that we fill each other's buckets through generosity and kind words. As we fill others' buckets and create happiness for others, our own buckets fill up and we ultimately create happiness for ourselves. To the contrary, when we are unkind or unwilling to help others, we are "bucket dippers", thus depleting the contents of everyone's bucket. What an important lesson for children (and adults) to learn!

As preschool teachers and supportive staff, you've probably spent countless hours helping young children develop and refine appropriate social skills. <u>Have You Filled A Bucket Today? A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids</u> can serve as an important teaching tool, helping children recognize the affect their behavior, both positive and negative, has on others. It stresses the value in treating others with respect and kindness.

Carol McCloud has done a wonderful job in conveying an important, much-needed message in a concrete manner that children can easily relate to. The simple, yet powerful text is supported by colorful, appealing illustrations which clearly convey the character's feelings, so relevant to this book.

Have You Filled A Bucket Today? A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids will appeal to children of all ages (and adults, too) and should be a "must read" in every preschool and elementary school alike. Why not add it to your library today? Perhaps if we start "filling buckets" at an early age we can truly make a difference in the world in which we live. It can't hurt!!!!

(Carol McCloud has recently written a subsequent book <u>Fill A Bucket: A Guide to Daily Happiness for the Young Child.</u> Although <u>Have You Filled A Bucket Today? A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids is appropriate reading for preschoolers, if you are working with very young children you may want to consider the subsequent book.)</u>



Ron, Dawn and Jan will be traveling to the following cities for Local, State, Regional and National Conferences on the dates indicated. We welcome you to attend the conferences. Information has been provided so you can contact the organization conducting the training/conference.

If we are going to be in your state or area, we welcome you to contact us about coming to your program or organization to do a private training. The cost of bringing us in to your program or organization is significantly reduced because we are already traveling to your area. We certainly don't mind adding a day or two to our travel schedules to work with you.

WHERE IN THE WORLD...

Contact us at (215) 785-3400 to March 24: EIRC Directors Trainsee if we can visit your program ing, Sewell, NJ. For information when we are in town.

Feb 25 and 26: HR BOOT CAMP: Orland Park, IL. For registration information go to www.childproviderlaw.com and look under Seminars.

March 3: Ocean and Shore County AEYC General Meeting, Toms River, NJ

March 12: Oregon Association of Child Care Directors, Newport, OR. For information email Carol McMurdie at mcmurdie@mac.com

March 13 and 14: CITE, Somerset, NJ. For information contact Helen Muscato at helenmuscato@verizon.net

March 17 and 18: HR BOOT CAMP: Boston, MA. For registration information ao to www.childproviderlaw.com and look under Seminars.

email Elmora Thomas at ethomas@oel.nj.us

April 1 and 2: Pennsylvania Head Start, Harrisburg, PA. For information go to www.paheadstart.org

April 24 - 26: Maryland State Child Care Association, Ocean City, MD. For information go to www.mscca.org

April 22 - 25: National Association of Child Care Professionals, Lake Buena Vista, FL. For information go to www.naccp.org

April 27 to May 2: National Head Start Assocation, Orlando, FL. For information go to www.nhsa.org

May 6: 4C: Community Coordinated Child Care, DeKalb, IL. For information contact www.four -c.org

