



Reaching Out

to the Child Care Community

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Winter 2010

Announcing the 2010 Child Care Provider Business Update

Every year the State of Minnesota in partnership with Resources for Child Caring (RCC) conducts the Minnesota Child Care Provider Business Update. Every licensed child care program will be contacted by the Referral Department between January and April regarding the business update.

Why is your participation important? The business update will:

-Provide accurate and current information about your business for families seeking referrals. In 2008, we provided over 18,000 referrals for families with this personalized information.

-Help the MN Department of Human Services identify changes and trends related to rates and other business practices

-Provide market rate data for help in determining future

Child Care Assistance Program maximum rates

-Provide updated statistics that will be available to you through RCC

Please take a few minutes to complete the form if you have not already done so. The business update must be to us no later than **March 24, 2010**. We offer a variety of options:

Online – starting January 11, go to www.mnchildcare.org, click on **Providers**. The online option will only be available until March 22, 2010.

Mail - download a paper copy from our website at www.resourcesforchildcare.org, and then send it to then send it to Referral Department, Resources for Child Caring, 2021 E Hennepin Ave, Suite 250, Minneapolis, MN 55413.

Call us - 651-641-0332, or 651-641-6605, or 651-366-6788 to complete your information over the phone. The Referral Department will be experiencing a high volume of calls during this time, please be patient with us. If you leave a message, please include the best time to return your call along with your name and phone number.

YOU COULD WIN!!

If your business update is received by **January 29, 2010**, your name will be entered into a drawing to possibly win one of many great prizes. Winners will be notified via e-mail and mail by March 1, 2010. Prizes include:

- ◆ The recently published Go Green Rating Scale for Early Childhood Settings and Handbooks donated by Redleaf Press. For more information about the Go Green products, visit www.gogreenratingscale.org
- ◆ Training vouchers to attend a 2 hour class for free donated by Professional Development Department at RCC
- ◆ Gift cards donated by Lakeshore Learning Materials
- ◆ Early childhood materials donated by Kaplan Early Learning Company

Thank you for your quick response to the
2010 Child Care Provider Business Update!

News on Parent Aware

What is Minnesota's Parent Aware Rating Tool?

Designed by child care providers, early learning professionals and parents, Minnesota's voluntary Parent Aware Rating Tool is intended to support our state's children by creating a rating system which identifies, recognizes and celebrates quality in early education. The rating tool will recognize early educators for the quality of care they deliver and build on this quality by supporting their efforts at program improvements. For more information, visit the Parent Aware web site www.parentawareratings.org.

Resources for Child Caring will be offering multiple opportunities for training on Parent Aware approved curriculum and assessments. Current Parent Aware providers may can attend these trainings at no cost, check with your Provider Resource Specialist. **Any child care provider or staff, regardless of being located in a Parent Aware pilot area or not, looking for ways to enhance their programs ability to prepare all children for school, are welcome and encouraged to attend these trainings.** Please reference the training catalog on page 18, mailed in December, or to download another copy, go to the Resources for Child Caring web-site. site www.resourcesforchildcare.org.



2010
Working With
TODAY'S GENERATION
2010 MNAEYC-MNSACA Annual Conference

February 5-6, 2010 • Saint Paul RiverCentre

Register Online Today! www.mnaeyc-mnsaca.org

- 94 Workshops in 8 core areas! Early Childhood, School Age, Youth Development, Leadership/Administration, Culture, Healthy Living, Intentional Learning, and Inclusion.
- 4 Friday Plenary sessions to choose from.
- Saturday Keynote
- 14.5 Inservice hours available!
- Over 40 Exhibitors
- Same great price as last year!




SUPPORTING PROFESSIONALS | PROMOTING QUALITY

Online Learning

Distance should not be a barrier to anyone who needs training. The Resources for Child Caring Learning Center provides easy access to education. Family child care business classes are currently available online. Visit www.rccllearningcenter.org

Eager-to-Learn is an innovative, community based, e-learning program of the Minnesota Child Care Resource & Referral Network. Courses are designed to provide quality, accessible, educational opportunities for people who care for children.

Visit www.mnchildcare.org



Minnesota Children's Museum has new exhibit

Travel back to the Cretaceous Period (145 - 65 million years ago), the time when dinosaurs last lived on earth. In *Dinosaurs: Land of Fire and Ice*, opening December 19 at Minnesota Children's Museum. Children and adults will explore dinosaur habitats to better understand how these mysterious animals lived and use inquiry skills to examine what they left behind. *Dinosaurs: Land of Fire and Ice* will continue through May 31, 2010.

Dinosaurs: Land of Fire and Ice - something big is coming to Minnesota Children's Museum in December.

Learn more at <http://MCM.org>

Voices for Children Advocacy Day

Don't let your policy makers make decisions without your input. Come to this year's Voices for Children Advocacy Day March 1, 2010 at 10am.in the Capitol Rotunda. Voices for Children is an opportunity for parents, teachers, early care and education professionals, and others from across the state to stand up and be counted as a voice for children. The event will include a rally in the Capitol Rotunda, fun activities for children, and opportunities to visit with legislators. For more information visit www.voicesforchildrenmn.org or call 651-644-8138 /1-866-644-8138.

Are you interested in becoming more involved in advocacy and public policy? Visit the RCC Legislative Action page on the web at www.resourcesforchildcare.org. RCC coordinates efforts with other organizations that work at the capitol on behalf of young children. Please contact Sandy Myers at 651-641-6635 or smyers@resourcesforchildcare.org or brians@mnaeyc.org or visit www.ready4k.org or

Combating Childhood Obesity

Over the next few issues of Reaching Out, RCC will be reprinting information and suggestions from the Nutrition and Physical Activity Self Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC) curriculum, aimed at utilizing the child care environment to help impact a growing health risk, childhood obesity. Nutrition and physical activity are important parts of good health. Enjoying and learning about food and physical activity in childhood leads to healthy behaviors for a lifetime.

Why does this matter:

- ◆ Currently, 1 in 4 preschools is overweight or obese
- ◆ 60 percent of overweight children 5 – 10 years of age already have at least one risk factor for heart disease
- ◆ Type 2 diabetes used to be called adult onset diabetes, but now it is being diagnosed in children as young as 9 years old!
- ◆ Children are at increased risk of joint pain

To discuss opportunities to initiate NAP SACC in your child care program or to take training, please call Sandy Myers at 651-641-6635 for more information.

More will be eligible for Earned Income Tax Credits

By Rosemary K. Heins, University of Minnesota Extension

The upcoming tax filing season brings several tax credit changes due to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) that will increase tax refunds for many. A major change for low- to moderate-income families is the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). ARRA legislation increased eligibility for those with three or more eligible children in the household. So what does this mean? Here are the 2009 earning levels for EITC:

- \$35,463 if you have one child in your home
- \$40,295 if you have two children in your home
- \$43,279 if you have three or more children in your home
- If you don't have children, made less than \$13,440, and were between the ages of 25 and 64 years during 2009, you may be eligible, too.

Add \$5,000 to the figures if you are married and filing jointly.

Remember, getting refunds through EITC normally has no effect on a person's or family's ability to get food or cash assistance, Social Security, Medical Assistance or subsidized housing programs. These tax credits are available to eligible workers even if they didn't have enough job income to be required to file tax forms. In other words, if you're eligible and don't owe any income tax, you may still get money back, but you must file federal tax forms to get the money. In addition, you qualify for the Minnesota Working Family Credit by filing a Minnesota income tax form.

There are other ARRA tax credits that will help families in the coming tax season. For more information visit the Internal Revenue Service website at www.irs.gov.

If you need help with the tax paperwork, contact VITA, which stands for Volunteer Income Tax Assistance. This free tax help will be available at sites all over Minnesota but sites generally don't open until the end of January or early February. This is because employers have until January 31 to issue W-2 forms.

There is also free electronic filing software online from the IRS website at www.irs.gov and the Minnesota Department of Revenue website at www.taxes.state.mn.us/.

It's important to have all needed documentation together prior to filing income tax forms. Information on free tax filing programs in Minnesota is available through United Way 211.

Rosemary K. Heins is family resource management educator with University of Minnesota Extension



Child Care Resource and Referral
10 Yorkton Court
St Paul, MN 55117

2021 E Hennepin Ave Suite 250
Minneapolis, MN 55413

Phone: 651-641-0305
Fax: 651-645-0990



News and Resources to Share?

If any organizations or individuals know of any resources that would be of value to early care and education professionals and are willing to share in a future issue of Reaching Out, please contact Sandy Myers at smyers@resourcesforchildcare.org or 651-641-6635.

Thank you for the following organizations for their contributions to this issues:

MNAYEC/MNSACA
Eager to Learn
MN Children’s Museum
University of MN Extension
NAP SACC

Metro CCR&R District Key Contacts

To update enrollment or note changes in your program contact:

Resource and Referral 651-641-0332

To register for classes: 651-641-3549

For grant information: 651-287-6919

For Local Technical Assistance:

Anoka County: Casey Green 763-783-4881

Carver County and Scott County: Marie Johnson
952-402-9824

Dakota County: Mischelle Ulrich 952-985-4045

Hennepin County: Fay Hopkins 651-641-6624

Ramsey County: Theresa Fountain 651-641-6610

Washington County: Holly Weisert 651-788-0425

Language Access Line: Support in Hmong, Somali, or Spanish: 651-665-0150