

SPECIAL NEWS FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

March, 2006



Welcome Jennifer L. Donahue, the new Family Support Specialist for Child Development Watch-Milford CDW office. Jennifer is thrilled to join CDW and looks forward in providing family support to our families and CDW Milford staff. Are you familiar with Stay and Plays Centers? They help provide fun activities for little ones and parents too! The best thing is it's all FREE! Perhaps you're interested in joining the new Parent Connections Support Group being offered at Easter Seals. Meet new parents, help reduce stress and embrace the support needed in just being a parent. Please feel free to contact Jennifer L. Donahue (302-424-7300) or Kellie McKeefery (302-995-8617) with ideas and suggestions of topics of interest. Reach us via-mail at kellie.mckeefery@state.de.us and JenniferL.Donahue@state.de.us

Kellie & Jennifer

Parenting Class

The six-week Parenting Series featuring Yvonne Naas, a family educator is being offered to families of children with special needs. Sponsored by Parent Information Center, this series will include Behavior, Discipline, Coping with Stress, Self-Esteem and Parenting Skills. Each session runs from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Registration is required and on a first come basis. There is no charge and childcare available on request. Call Kellie McKeefery (302) 995-8617 or Peggy Miller (302) 255-9134 for more info.



Stay and Plays

Stay and Play Centers provide developmental activities for children birth through 3 years of age. Led by a Certified Parent Educator, parents and children are invited to play together, listen to a story, learn new songs, finger plays and network with other families. Stay & Play Centers are part of the Parent As Teachers Program. They are located statewide, and FREE to families with no registration required.

For more information on activities call Whitney Jenkins in New Castle County (302)454-5955, or Anna Scovell in Sussex County (302)856-5239 or Carmen Gallagher (302)697-4545 for Kent County locations.

ATTENTION ALL FAMILIES...

From Jan-June we will need families of children with special healthcare needs, who are willing to participate in a brief interview. The information that you provide will be used to develop Health and Wellness initiatives for children living with a disability. Respondents will receive \$15.00 per interview. To schedule an interview, select your county and call: **New Castle:**

Annie Tanverdi (302) 831-8802

Alisha Ralford-Hall (302) 369-2186 ext.255

Kent: **Thomas Kelly** (302) 739-5524

Sussex: **Beth Collins** (302) 934-8031

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Passing the Baton

Transitioning Out of the Early Intervention System
Into Your Local School District

By : Samtra K. Devard- Parent

We all go through periods of transition. Whether it is transitioning from high school to college, from college to the workforce or from single life to being married with children. The list of transitions that we all experience is endless.

But for children in the early intervention system and their families, there is one transition that is crucial in laying the educational foundation that will be built upon in the years that follow. That transition is from the early intervention system into the specific school district where that child resides. This transition is analogous to a relay race- only the focus isn't about the competition with another team, the key is making sure the baton is passed from the service coordinator to the parent without being dropped.

Parents, who have not been trained, informed or simply told about what to expect, are often caught by surprise by their larger role in the planning of educational and related service goals for their child.

Here are a few tips that I think are very helpful to any parent transitioning out of the early intervention system and their local school system:

- Make plan's to visit all possible placements well in advance of you child's third birthday. If possible take your child with you for the visit.
- Ask questions. Write them down and make sure you have a clear understanding of the response.
- Ask to connect with a family within the same district and placement.
- Ask your service coordinator to help guide you through the process of transition.
- Organize yourself. Keep all documents, appointments notices and paperwork together.
- Know your hopes for your child. Let that guide you when developing their individualized education plan.
- Even if the baton drops, stop and pick it up and keep running your race.



How to Foster Early Reading Skills By: Karron Ross

Introducing your child to the world of reading is one of the most important things that you can do to ensure success in school. Children who are read to have a larger vocabulary, better comprehension skills and a vast imagination. The following are activities that parents can do at home to enhance skills:

- As you go about your daily activities, talk to your preschooler about what you are doing. For example describes what clothes you are helping your child to put on and ask him/her to choose between the green shirt and the blue striped shirt.
- Hearing you talk is your baby's very first step toward becoming a reader, because it helps him/her to begin to love language and to learn words.
- Try to spend 15-20 minutes each day to read with your child. Don't be discouraged if you have to skip a day or don't always keep to your schedule.
- Ask your child to try to guess what will happen next in the story. Answer questions about the story and keep it interactive.
- Once your child has read the story several times, a fun activity is to have them read the story back to you. Ask questions about the story as they would ask questions to you.
- Tell your child stories about your parents or grandparents. Pull out photo albums and share stories or your childhood with your child.
- Make a trip journal with your child. Take photographs of special events and write a sentence about the experience.

These ideas were taken from *Helping Your Child Become a Reader*, U S Department of Education. For further information contact Karron Ross, Outreach Coordinator READ-ALoud (302)656-5256.