



EARLY LEARNING COMMUNITY RESOURCE KORNER

STEP, Inc. Central Regional Key

April 2010

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One Book, Every Young Child Reading Initiative.



During the Week of the Young Child 2010, Central Regional Key staff, with help from three state employees, shared this year's Pennsylvania ONE BOOK, What a Treasure!, By Jane and Will Hillenbrand, to 20 sites touching over 500 children.



WELCOME TO THE CENTRAL REGIONAL KEY



Hello! My name is Mary Domino Wilson and I am a new Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant with the Central Regional Key. My educational background includes an AA in Human Services from PA College of Technology, a Master of Human Services Degree from Lincoln University, and post-graduate certification in Family Systems Therapy from Temple University. I have worked with children and families for several years as a therapist and behavioral consultant. I feel very passionate about Early Childhood Mental Health because I believe that addressing challenging behaviors and developmental issues in early childhood can have a positive lifelong impact. I have had the pleasure of meeting some of our providers and children and I look forward to meeting even more of you!

New STAR Standards Previewed for Family Providers

Beginning July 1, 2010, Family providers will begin operating with new Keystone STAR performance standards, developed in recognition of tremendous strides made thus far towards quality enhancement and to build upon that success. These Standards were developed with input from family child care home providers, representatives of Child Care Providers United, regional key staff from across the state and PA Key staff. Follow-up focus groups throughout Pennsylvania provided feedback influenced the final draft of changes. The result of implementation will further your quality reputation. STARS Mangers are available to assist providers in understanding and meeting the changes.

Professional Development Opportunities in the Central Region

SACC Module 3:	5/3/2010 6:30-9:30PM	Penn State Cooperative Extension Union County, Mifflinburg
Creating Creative Classrooms: Dramatic Play (Part 4 of Play and Creativity Series)	5/4/2010 6:00-9:00PM	Lewisburg Children's Center, Lewisburg
Embrace Our Differences	5/5/2010 6:00-8:00PM	Pennsylvania Highlands Community College, Ebensburg
Guiding the Behavior of School-age Children	5/5/2010 10:00AM-1:00PM	Begin With Us Child Care and Preschool, Altoona
Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) 202	5/6/2010 1:00-3:00PM	Columbia County Cooperative Extension Office, Bloomsburg
Environment Rating Scale (ERS) 101 - Foundations	5/6/2010 10:00-12:00AM	Columbia County Cooperative Extension Office, Bloomsburg
Exploring Individual Differences in School-Age Children-Implications for Programming	5/6/2010 6:00-9:00PM	Johnstown City Center Head Start, Johnstown
Collaborative Leadership	5/6/2010 1:00-4:00PM	Begin With Us Child Care and Preschool, Altoona
Exploring the Developmental Needs and Characteristics of School-age Children	5/8/2010 9:30AM-12:30PM	Panda Preschool and Day Care Center, Burnham
Fighting Children's Obesity Part I: They Are What They Eat	5/10/2010 6:30-8:30PM	Cambria County Extension Office, Ebensburg
Including Fathers in Your Program	5/10/2010 6:00-9:00PM	Danville Child Development Center, Danville
Facilitating Math & Science in Early Childhood Programs (Part 5 of Play and Creativity Series)	5/11/2010 6:00-9:00PM	Lewisburg Children's Center, Lewisburg
Fighting Children's Obesity Part II: Active Play	5/11/2010 6:30-8:30PM	The Becky Sheetz Center, Altoona
Guiding School-Age Children in Groups	5/11/2010 6:00-9:00PM	Johnstown City Center Head Start, Johnstown
Diversity: Opening Their Hearts and Minds Through Classroom Experiences	5/12/2010 6:00-8:00PM	Pennsylvania Highlands Community College, Ebensburg
SACC Module: Exploring the Continuum of Developmental Tasks of School-Age Children from 5 - 12 -- Implications for Programming	5/12/2010 6:30-9:30PM	Penn State Cooperative Extension Union County, Mifflinburg
Guiding the Behavior of Children of Individual Children	5/19/2010 6:00-9:00PM	Johnstown City Center Head Start, Johnstown
Fighting Children's Obesity Part II: Active Play	5/20/2010 6:30-8:30PM	Penn State Extension Office, Ebensburg
Increasing Fiber Intake in Pre-school Age Children	5/20/2010 7:00-9:00PM	Penn State Cooperative Extension Lycoming County, Montoursville
Summer Time is Fun Time	5/20/2010 6:30-8:30PM	Penn State Cooperative Extension, New Bloomfield
Finding Art In Every Standard	5/22/2010 10:30AM-12:30PM	Penn State Cooperative Extension Union County, Mifflinburg
Something For Every Season	5/22/2010 1:00-3:00pm	Penn State Cooperative Extension Union County, Mifflinburg
Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ITERS-R) 201	5/25/2010 1:00-3:00PM	The Arena Restaurant, Bedford
School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale (SACERS) 203	5/25/2010 10:00AM-12:00PM	The Arena Restaurant , Bedford
School-age Care Environment Rating Scale (SACERS) 203	5/26/2010 10:00AM-12:00PM	Columbia County Cooperative Extension Office, Bloomsburg
Infant/toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ITERS-R) 201	5/26/2010 1:00-3:00pm	Columbia County Cooperative Extension Office Bloomsburg PA 17815

A current comprehensive calendar can be found at www.pakeys.org

Upcoming Professional Development Conferences

The Central Regional Key is conducting a Family Day Care Home Conference in Lewisburg Friday and Saturday, June 18 and 19.

The schedule is as follows:

Friday Evening 6:30 - 9:30
FCCERS or OUNCE Paper (Part 1)

Saturday Morning 7:30 - 11:30
Pediatric First Aid

Saturday Morning 8:30 - 11:30
Work Sampling Paper (Part 1)

Saturday Afternoon 1:00 - 4:00
OUNCE Paper (Part 2) or **Work Sampling Paper** (Part 2)

Other Conferences

<u>Name</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Date</u>
Sullivan County CEG	Sullivan County High School	May 15
11th Annual Early Childhood Conference	Bloomsburg University	May 19

*The Leader's Assignment
A Professional Development Workshop
By Nationally Renowned
Brian C. Johnson*

www.briancjohnson.net

Center directors and one staff are cordially invited to attend

The Central Regional Key

2nd Annual Leadership Conference

Friday, May 21, 2010

12:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Susquehanna University

514 University Avenue, Selinsgrove, PA

12:00 - 1:00 Networking and snacks

1:00 - 4:00 Brian C. Johnson

*4:30 - Reception with Brian C. Johnson
and*

Catherine Cormany, OCDEL

5:00 - 7:00 Dinner

*7:00 Catherine Cormany and
Leadership Presentations*

RSVP by Friday, May 14, 2010

1-800-346-3020, Ext. 9736, Sherry McKinney

Brian C. Johnson

Brian serves as a faculty member in the department of developmental instruction at Bloomsburg University and is the director of the Frederick Douglass Institute for Academic Excellence. He is a founder of the Pennsylvania Association of Liaisons and Officers of Multicultural Affairs, a consortium that promotes best practices in higher education. He is a former trainer with the National Coalition Building Institute and was certified in their prejudice reduction and controversial issues process modules. He is a featured columnist on the Antiracistparent.com website. He also has professional experience in social and human services. Brian is the co-author of *Reel Diversity: A Teacher's Sourcebook* (2008) and in the fall of 2009, Sense Publishers released *We've Scene It All Before: Using Film Clips in Diversity Awareness Training*.

STARS Technical Assistance

FAQ-Frequently Asked Questions

What is STARS TA?

One on one service provided to help a facility achieve specific Keystone STARS quality standards and movement in STAR levels.

Who is eligible for STARS TA?

Facilities awarded a STAR level AND are enrolled in or have completed the STARS Core Professional Development Series

How much do the services cost?

THERE IS NO COST. Services are provided based on availability of resources.

Will my facility/staff be evaluated in any way?

Consultants may use a variety of tools including observation, ERS-Environment Rating Scales, PAS-Program Administration Scale, etc.

How will participating benefit our facility?

Enhance skills needed to provide continuous quality improvement in early learning or school age programs.

How do I request services?

TA applications available from Central Regional Key 1-800-346-3020 x 9735 or on www.pakeys.org.

ERS News

The ERS Emphasis on Using Language to Develop Reasoning Skills by Sue White

Language not only serves the function of communication with others, it also provides the framework to help us think about and understand ourselves and the world around us.

Best practice includes staff talk about logical relationships while children use materials that stimulate reasoning and encouraging children to talk through or explain their reasoning when solving problems, how they made decisions to categorize objects, their ideas and perceptions while working with materials, etc.

Talking about relationships includes staff explaining concepts illustrated in particular materials. For example, if a child is playing with a puzzle, staff talk to the children about the picture before the pieces are removed so the children have an idea of what they are trying to reconstruct, talk to children what they see in puzzle pieces, their shapes and colors, how they relate to the “whole” picture, and suggesting trial and error so the children begin to recognize what pieces are edge pieces, which are middle, which are the same color, or what picture is on the piece. Examples of materials that stimulate reasoning include matching games, scales with items to weigh and balance, puzzles, sorting, sequencing cards and anything that can be sorted such as collections, crayons, pictures, counting bears, etc.

Staff also encourage children to explain their reasoning when they have solved a logical problem while using the materials that stimulate reasoning. This takes the focus from teacher talk to asking open-ended questions. This level of reasoning requires the child to “think” about the actions they took and “express” them in words. By listening to the explanations provided by the child, the staff is able to determine how the child understands concepts, as well as helps the child internalize new ways of thinking.

Grant News

Shopping was fun. What is my next step for my grant?

Within 90 days of receipt of your award check, your completed expense report should be returned to the Key. Note that if a circumstance prohibits this from happening, contact your STARS Manager before the deadline so that a budget revision can be submitted.

As you receive invoices for goods purchased, it is a good idea to mark what items, what category materials are reflected (i.e. Learning Materials/Infant Toddler) to ensure smooth sailing should you be in the 25% randomly selected for monitoring. Remember that categories can only be changed with a budget revision.

In the event of monitoring, be prepared to show verification of hire and compensation for ERA awards.



SCIENCE FOR EVERYDAY



Be the first to share your experience with the following activities and win a prize.

Send a picture with description to mjohnson@stepcorp.org

One winner for each age group.

Infant/Toddler

Observe animals in their natural habitat (infant/toddler)

As you take an infant or toddler on a walk, point out sounds he/she can listen to such as a bird chirping. Point out insects crawling, dogs barking, squirrels climbing up trees. The world of animals is a new science discovery!

Water, water and more water (toddler)

Fill the water table or a bin with water and add various types of containers, cups, sponges, etc. The child will explore using these materials and see how water runs, pours, etc.

School Age *Mini Garden – A Great Project for Mother’s Day*

Materials: A variety of flower seeds in packages, egg cartons, potting soil, small stones, tooth picks, masking tape, fine point markers, 2-4 inch clay pots.

Set Up: This project is best done outdoors on a warmer day.

Procedure:

Sprinkle a small layer of stones in each cup of the egg carton.

Add potting soil to each egg carton cup approx ¾ fill.

Place 3-4 flower seeds in egg carton cup and cover with potting soil.

Make mini signs for each egg carton cup by writing seed name on masking tape and folding tape over a tooth pick.

Place tooth pick in egg carton cup identifying each flower.

Bring the garden indoors. Place in a sunny area and water as needed.

Watch your seeds grow.

Replant into 2-4 inch clay pot in approx 2-3 weeks.

Continue to water and watch your seeds grow into a Mother’s Day gift.



Preschool *Observing Capillary Action*

How do flowers get water up from the ground or a vase and into their stems, leaves, and petals? Use food coloring to demystify this gravity-defying feat of nature, and watch as a white flower changes color before your eyes!

Your child will learn about the forces that can move liquids, including gravity and suction, about how plants are able to nourish themselves with clever mechanics, and about colors and color mixing. He'll also end up with a unique custom-dyed flower!

What You Need:

Water	1 or 2 clear jars or plastic containers
White carnations	Food coloring



What You Do:

1. Fill a clear jar about halfway with water.
2. Ask your child to choose a color. Add quite a lot of food coloring to the water jar. Your child can help with this if he wants to, but watch out for his clothes!
3. Cut off several inches from the bottom of the stem of a white carnation and then ask your child to put it in the jar.
4. Observe it every day to see if the food coloring can be seen in the petals.

If you want to get fancy, use two jars and two colors, and split the carnation stem between the two jars of colored water.

What happens to the petals?

What You Talk About:

- How did the color get into the stem/leaves/flower? Did it have to go up or down to get to the petals?
- Does water usually move up or down?
- Explain to your child: The important thing about capillarity is that it can make water move up. This is opposite the direction water usually moves, which is down due to gravity. The tiny pieces of water that can get into tiny tubes in the flower are small enough to be drawn upwards by being attracted to the sides of the tubes or capillaries in the stem. The attraction is stronger than the pull of gravity.

Try making more flowers of different colors! They make great gifts and give your child a lovely opportunity to show off his newfound scientific knowledge.

Early Childhood Mental Health

Five Protective Factors

We all know that some children and families can bounce back from and cope well with difficult circumstances in their lives, while others have a really hard time. All too often, when families are unable to find healthy ways to cope with the stresses of daily living, bad things happen, like child abuse and neglect.

Child and family experts talk about the “protective factors” that help children and families cope with adversity and thrive despite their challenges. Protective factors are conditions in families and communities that increase the health and well-being of children and families and help to prevent family violence.

So what are these protective factors? A project called “Strengthening Families Through Early Care and Education” lists five protective factors that can prevent child abuse and neglect:

Parental resilience: the ability to cope and bounce back from difficult circumstances

Social connections: people in the community (friends, family members, neighbors, teachers, etc.) who can provide emotional support

Knowledge of parenting and child development: accurate information about how children develop and what to expect, along with knowledge about appropriate discipline techniques

Concrete support in times of need: financial security, formal support like Medical Assistance or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and informal support from social networks

Children’s social and emotional competence: a child’s ability to get along with others and communicate his or her emotions effectively

Pennsylvania is one of a number of states that are incorporating information about these protective factors into training and expectations for child care and early learning facilities. The idea is to make sure that parents are valued and families are supported by staff who are committed to building good relationships with them. Staff are trained to recognize the signs of stress that could lead to child abuse or neglect and be able to offer positive support to families.

More information about protective factors:

Strengthening Families National Network: www.strengtheningfamilies.net

Child Information Gateway: www.childwelfare.gov/can/factors/protective.cfmbn

Strengthening Families and Communities: 2010 Resources Guide, published by the federal Administration on Children, Youth and Families: www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/res_guide_2010/guide.pdf

SACC UPDATE

Celebrate May as “My Principal Matters” Month

Recognizing the important role that principals play in supporting high-quality afterschool programs, NAA (National Afterschool Alliance) will designate the month of May as “My Principal Matters” month. Programs are encouraged to present this award to acknowledge, strengthen, and celebrate active relationships with their school principals. Let them know you appreciate their time supporting after-school programming.

Invite them to join you program for a morning or afternoon. Have your students make a special snack for them. Have your program create a special award for your principal - card, certificate, plaque, picture or video. There are many ways for the students and staff to acknowledge them. Be creative. Let them participate in a game of kickball on the playground. There are many ways in which they can play an active role in your program. Let them know all the great work you do and acknowledge their support.

SACC Practitioners join the following list serve for some very good professional development and funding opportunities

ppas@listserv.aed.org.

A word from a STAR—

Practitioners reflect on their participation in the LEARNING TOGETHER WITH YOUNG CHILDREN Roundtable series.

Page

“What a great way to engage in learning and be able to further our knowledge of working with children!”

~ Natali Prindle
Bostley’s preschool



“This has been a wonderful time, sharing ideas and problems, finding new things and solutions.”

~ Kim Wasp
Creative Day Care



“I actually put the ideas given during the roundtable experience to practice in my PreK classroom and succeeded!”

~ Tammy Schreppel
ECLC

“We enjoyed the informality which filled the class to share ideas that worked in our centers. The text challenged us to explore deeper learning experiences with our children. As 20+ veterans in the early education profession would definitely recommend this class. It was a lot of fun!”

~ Deb and Holly
Little Lambs

“I am so glad I took part in the Learning Together with Young Children series. I had the opportunity to meet new people and learn new things. It was very interesting because it showed ways to extend children’s learning. It also taught me how to think outside the box. Most importantly, the series taught me that it is OK to break away from my usual way of helping children learn. Michele and Shannon, thank you for an awesome series. I learned so much!”

~ April Woodton
Bostley’s Preschool



“Shannon and Michele have made the classes very enjoyable and have shared their ideas with us so we can take them back to our children. Working together at the roundtable has been a pleasure.”

~ Susan Edkin

“I really enjoyed working with others and sharing our ideas for our classrooms.”

~ Stacie Swank

“I learned new and interesting ideas to spark learning and creativity in my preschool classroom”

~ Ashley Bailey
ECLC

“I’ve enjoyed coming to the sessions and learning things I can take back to my class”

~ Rose Poust
Creative Day Care



Look who’s Moving to a Higher STAR

STAR 1

- Tyrone Area Elementary School– Blair
- Pamela Anderson-Meyer– Tioga
- The Edge Fitness and Martial Arts Center– Bradford
- Carolyn’s Child Care Center (Group)- Cambria
- Gingerbread Lane Child Care– Union
- From Cradle to Crayons a Children’s Enrichment Co.– Lycoming

STAR 1

- Burnham United Methodist Church Preschool– Mifflin
- Cradle To Crayons– Huntingdon
- Owens Family Child Care– Columbia
- Little Red School House– Cambria
- Little Garden Patch– Centre

STAR 2

- Philipsburg School Age– Centre