Dear Friends,

HAPPY FALL! It’s been interesting to see evidences of seasonal changes while still enjoying summer’s warm temperatures. One sign of Fall for me has been the delightful discovery of many ripe pumpkins at the edge of my yard, growing on a huge plant that came up all by itself on my brush pile! I have already given many of them away, but it seems they continue to multiply, at least I keep discovering more.

There have been changes around our office over the summer too. One of those was very personal as I retired from full time employment the end of June. (Since then the NPUC has asked if I would continue assisting on a part time basis in early childhood, and I am very happy to do that for the time being.) Paulette Jackson, our NPUC registrar also retired, and for a very good reason—to take care of her new granddaughter. Replacing her is Debbie Hendrickson (who we “stole” from Columbia Adventist Academy where she served as vice principal).

I know there have been changes for many of your schools and centers as well. Some colleagues have moved on and they will be greatly missed. For those of you who recently joined us, we WELCOME you to our early childhood family! We look forward to getting better acquainted. Soon you will receive a little updated NPUC ECEC directory so you’ll have the names (and locations) of ECEC colleagues within our 5-state territory. Then, next June, you will have the opportunity to attend our NPUC ECEC two-day workshop where names will acquire faces. (This workshop is held every other year, in June, here at the NPUC office in Ridgefield, Washington.)

Speaking of our ECEC directory, we need your updates. Please make special note of the last two pages of this newsletter, including the opening report. Please fill these out at your earliest convenience. You can either print them off and mail them in (5709 N. 20th St, Ridgefield, WA 98642, attn. Sue Patzer) or just email the information to me (sue.patzer@nw.npuc.org).

May God bless each one as we daily minister for Him.

Sue
It’s Staff Meeting Time...Again?
(Thanks to Julie Yamada, PUC Associate ECE Director)

As a staff it is important to come together and discuss important events and issues that are happening at the preschool. But so many times we get into a rut, and then staff meeting just becomes part of the routine. Once they become routine, meetings tend to follow the same agenda with the same people leading the discussion. When this happens, nothing seems to get accomplished and everyone is bored.

How do we bring back the creativity, team building and collaboration with colleagues? One idea would be to schedule staff meeting only as needed. One of the worst habits an organization can fall into is holding meetings just because there is an expectation that there should be meetings. The meetings should have a purpose such as to share information, share opinions, provide support and solve problems, but also to provide time for learning and skill building.

Another suggestion is to change the location of the staff meeting each time. The type of environment the meeting is held in can make the difference in participation, because after sitting in small chairs all day teachers are not going to be excited about sitting even longer in them for a meeting. If there is a specific meeting room designated for meetings, perhaps it would help to create an environment that is inviting to the staff. Replace chairs with bean bags or sofas for a softer space. Plug in lamps for a warmer light, cover wall space with student artwork, fun posters, or whiteboards that encourage innovation by letting teachers draw pictures, scribble inspiring quotes, or jot down ideas.

To add to the learning environment for the staff, occasionally invite a guest speaker to present on a topic related to early childhood education or other topics of interest (poll the staff for their ideas). If a staff member has recently attended a workshop, invite them to present on what they learned so that the other teachers may benefit from the information. Allowing peers to teach each other encourages accountability and helps augment the new concepts in the learner’s and trainer’s minds.

Sometimes staff meetings can sneak up on a director, but it is important to set dates so that everyone is aware of when they are. Plan ahead by having an agenda prepared and know what you will be discussing or teaching in the meeting.

Start the meeting with a fun game that will build interest, energize the group and help build a sense of team. When presenting the main topic, use props, power points or games that will help give ideas for discussion.

As the meeting comes to a close, share celebrations, upcoming events, or recognition of teachers or feature a classroom and the new or fun things they are doing to promote play and learning. For ideas on team building games to do at work go to: http://top7business.com/?Top-7-Quick-Team-Building-Games-to-Play-at-Work&id=1200

References

(On a personal note, I once taught at a school where staff meetings were a delight to attend. The principal always included an inspirational thought, words of affirmation, encouragement, or commendation, and a fun or funny game with a small prize. And most importantly, always included was a time for prayer requests and prayer. No matter what challenges we faced we left the meeting feeling valued and supported. Sue)

THE NAPPING HOUSE
This is one of my friend Julie’s favorite books because you can do so many fun activities with it. “I used it to teach sequencing and cause and effect, using the story, and the children loved it! I would read it for a month and have activities that would go along with the book at circle time. This is one fun activity that I did at circle time: I had cut outs of each character and the bed, which I passed out to different children every day. They would have to listen very carefully so that they would know when to bring up their character as they were mentioned in the story.” Here is a link to create your own circle time game:

IDEAS, IDEAS, IDEAS...

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH
(Mes de la Herencia Hispana)

September 15—October 15, 2014
As a Pre-K teacher, if you have not been asked the question, “Will my child be ready for Kindergarten?” then you know at some point during the school year you will be approached by a panicked parent with these very words. Most parents do not understand the dynamics of a preschool classroom and the intentional preparation that a teacher must do. In knowing this, teachers need to remember that they are also educating the parents on what their child is learning and what is developmentally appropriate practice in a preschool classroom. So before the question comes up, start educating the families through regular communication so that they know from the start what their children are learning.

Play and learning seem to be hard for some parents to understand, therefore it is important to show them what children are learning through their play. Children benefit both from engaging in self-initiated, spontaneous play and from teacher-planned and structured activities, projects, and experiences. Play is a way for children to practice what they have learned and to build a foundation so that they can continue to add to their knowledge.

Some fun ideas to communicate to parents on a regular basis about what children are experiencing and learning in the classroom are:

1. A classroom book – Play is the child’s work! Take pictures of the children in the different centers, then create a book that children can sign out and take home to share with their parents. An example would be to take a picture of children “playing” in the math center then write on the page, “Math-It looks like I’m playing, but I’m developing oral language, social skills, small motor skills, concepts about quantity, shape, size, pattern, and an interest in math. I may use these tools as a computer programmer, accountant, or mathematician in the future.” To see an example of how to create this book go to: [http://drijean.org/html/monthly_act/act_2011/07_Jul_css/pg04.html](http://drijean.org/html/monthly_act/act_2011/07_Jul_css/pg04.html)

2. Create a documentation board showing what the children are learning through pictures and descriptions. For an example go to: [http://abcdoes.typepad.com/abc-does-a-blog/2012/11/child-led-learning-in-display.html](http://abcdoes.typepad.com/abc-does-a-blog/2012/11/child-led-learning-in-display.html)

3. Hand out a Friday note that shares with the parents what the children learned or explored during the week and give a preview of what will be happening the next week. Share books that you are going to introduce or activities that they can do at home to help children practice what they have learned in preschool. For an example go to: [http://www.dragonfliesinfirst.com/2012/09/parent-teacher-communication.html](http://www.dragonfliesinfirst.com/2012/09/parent-teacher-communication.html)

4. Post the weekly lesson plans for parents to see and for referencing when a parent may have a question about what is being taught in the classroom.

5. Invite parents to volunteer once a month to share one of their hobbies, read a book, do a cooking project with the children or bring something for the classroom that is important for the children to learn with and explore. This will give them a view of what happens in the classroom, and they will come to appreciate the learning that happens all around. An example of getting parents to help out would be to have a “Play Dough Club” where parents sign up to make and bring play dough for the classroom. For an example of a form to start this go to: [http://mrsalbanesesclass.blogspot.com/2011/08/playdough-club.html](http://mrsalbanesesclass.blogspot.com/2011/08/playdough-club.html)

The more information a parent has about early learning the less they will worry about their child’s readiness for kindergarten. By using some of these simple ideas or others you may have, you can relieve the parents’ concerns about their child’s development.

Reference

“Play gives children a chance to practice what they are learning.”
– Fred Rogers
**Getting to Know YOU!**

**Pat Wister**, director of **Palisades Christian Learning Center**, on the campus of Palisades Christian Academy in Spokane, Washington, was born into a military family who traveled around the world before finally settling in La Sierra, California. Since Pat was from a long line of teachers, it was in her genes to follow that path, graduating from Loma Linda University.

Pat and her husband Dan (principal of PCA) have four children, the last two having just left for Walla Walla University. Pat and Dan also have four “and a half” grandchildren.

Though she has taught for many years in the Adventist elementary school system, Pat is now enjoying working with “the littler people” because she says, “every hour is different”. This is her second year as director of PCLC which has classrooms for toddlers, preschoolers and pre-kindergartners. Regarding her staff, Pat comments, “**Olga Grigoryan, Sherri Codd, and Kelly Seymour are the best lead teachers, with great support from Denise Ellenwood, Maya Rai, Jennifer Reyes, Wendy Urbin, Elena Rebant, and our newest addition, Megan Meyer!**”

She continues, “**We serve children from ages 12 months through their fifth year when they graduate and go on to Kindergarten. We continue to grow almost daily! Right now our enrollment is at 51, not including our After School program, which is run for school age children.**”

Pat remembers the days when many of our colleges offered Early Childhood Education and hopes that, that day will soon return. She envisions a time when Adventist young women are actively recruited to take this career path, and when pay is based on education and experience, compensating hardworking staff with more than minimum wage. (“**Amen**” to that, Pat!)
NAEYC Gives Suggestions to Parents...
What to Look for When Choosing a Center

INFANTS
1. Group size is limited to no more than 8 babies, with at least one teacher for every 3 children
2. Each infant is assigned to a primary caregiver, allowing for strong bonds to
3. Teachers show warmth and support to infants throughout the day, making eye contact and talking to
4. Teachers are alert to babies’ cues, holding or moving them to a new place or position, giving babies a variety in what they can look at and do.
5. Teachers follow standards for health and safety, including proper hand washing.
6. Teachers pay close attention and talk and sing to children during routines such as diapering, feeding, dressing.
7. Teachers can see and hear infants at all times.
8. Teachers welcome parents to drop by at any time.

TODDLERS
1. The children remain with their primary teacher so they can form strong relationships
2. The teacher learns to respond to toddler’s individual temperament, needs and cues, and builds strong relationships and communication with child’s family.
3. Teachers recognize that the toddlers are not yet able to communicate all of their needs through language, and promptly respond to children’s cues or other signs of distress.
4. Teachers set good examples for children by treating others with kindness and respect.
5. Teachers encourage toddlers’ language skills so children can express their wants and needs with words.
6. Teachers frequently read sing to toddlers.
7. Teachers engage toddlers in everyday routines such as eating, toileting and dressing so children can learn new skills and better control their own behaviors.
8. Children have many opportunities for safe, active, and large-muscle play, both indoors and outdoors.
9. Teachers have training in child development or early childhood education specific to the toddler age group.
10. Parents are always welcome.

PRESCHOOL, ages 3-5
1. Children follow their own individual development patterns which may vary greatly from child to child.
2. Children feel safe and secure in their environment.
3. Children have activities and materials that offer just enough challenge—neither so easy that they are boing nor so difficult that they lead to frustration.
4. Children can connect what they learn with past experience and current interest.
5. Children have opportunities to explore and play.
6. Teachers nurture children’ language. They talk, listen and provide opportunities for sharing ideas and feelings.
7. Teachers read to the children every day individually, in small groups, and as a whole class.
8. Teachers help children get the most out of every learning situation. They make comments, ask questions, and add new challenges, as children are ready for them.

NAEYC
National Association for the Education of Young Children
Annual Conference & Expo
Dallas, TX—November 5-8, 2014

This is the largest early childhood education conference in the world!
Besides topnotch plenary sessions and breakouts, the exhibit hall features over 1,000 booths.

For more information or to register: www.naeyc.org
Has any of your center information changed?

**UPDATED** Information **NEEDED** for the 2014-15...

**NPUC EARLY CHILDHOOD DIRECTORY**

**PLEASE fill out and return A.S.A.P.**

(Email: sue.patzer@nw.npuc.org or Mail: Sue Patzer, NPUC, 5709 N 20th St., Ridgefield, WA 98642)

1. NAME of your center (or school in which PRE-K is located):

2. If the center is located on a school or church campus please note this. (example: “on the campus of Smith Memorial Adventist School”)

3. Please check whether you are:
   ___ Church based  ___ school based  ___ independently incorporated, with denominational status

4. ADDRESS of center/school:

5. Mailing address if different from #4:

6. Phone number of center/school:

7. Website of center/school *(optional)*:

8. Director of center or Head teacher of class:

9. Director’s (Head Teacher’s) email address & phone number:

10. Other teacher(s) & staff you want listed: 
    (if multiple teachers, include ages they serve)

11. Teacher’s (& staff) email address & phone number:

12. Any other information you would like to include about your center/Pre-K. 
    (example: “serving infants through pre-K” or “NAEYC accredited”, etc.)
**Early Childhood Education & Care Program (ECEC)**

North Pacific Union Conference  
5709 N 20th St.  
Ridgefield, WA 98642  
(Phone) 360-857-7000

**OPENING REPORT**  
Fiscal Year - 2014-15

A Seventh-day Adventist ECEC program is a purposefully organized entity hosted by a Seventh-day Adventist church or school which provides for the educational and custodial needs of children who may range in age from birth through Pre-Kindergarten.

The Pre-K Teacher or Director of the ECEC program should submit this report to the NPUC Office of Education by September 30, 2014. It should include data for each age group served by the ECEC program.

<table>
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**CENTER INFORMATION**

- **Name of School/Center**
- **Address**
- **City**
- **State**
- **Zip**
- **Phone# ( )**
- **Fax# ( )**
- **E-mail**

**Teacher/Director (First Name)**

**Type of School/Center (Check)**

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Infant  
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Toddler  
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Preschool & Child Care  
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Child Care Only  
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ AM Preschool Only  
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Pre-Kindergarten -4 hrs or less  
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten Mixed -4 hrs or less  
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Pre-Kindergarten — more than 4 hrs  
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten Mixed — more than 4 hrs  
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Before & After School Care  
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ School Age Summer Program

**SIZE OF CENTER**

- License Capacity: _____
- Part-time Students: _____
- Full-time Students: _____
- Full-time Equivalent: _____

**OPENING REPORT**

Enrollment Total _____ as of (date) ______________

- Infants —12 Months
- 12—24 Months
- 24—36 Months
- 36—48 Months
- 48—60 Months
- 60 Months—School Age
- Special Needs

**RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION**

- Number of students with one parent/guardian a Seventh-day Adventist member: 
- Number of students with neither parent/guardian a Seventh-day Adventist member: 
- Number of students with both parents/guardians Seventh-day Adventist members: 
- Number of students whose parents have not identified a religious affiliation: 
- Number of (former or current) ECEC students now attending an Adventist kindergarten: 

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Check the type of school/center that most closely describes the services of your ECEC program.