A word from our North American Division ECE leader—

Greetings!

It gives me great pleasure to serve the Seventh-day Adventist Church as the Early Childhood Education Associate in the North American Division (NAD) Department of Education. I look forward to the opportunity of meeting each of you, and I hope that you will join me at the 2012 Teachers Convention at the Gaylord Opryland Hotel and Convention Center in Nashville this August!

This first-ever NAD Teachers Convention to include Early Childhood promises to be filled with networking opportunities and informative breakout sessions designed with you in mind. There will, undoubtedly, be fun, laughter, and giveaways to help enhance your journey as an ECEC provider.

You will have the opportunity to share your ideas and talents as we cast a vision for the future, and you will also experience first-hand some of the rewards of the labor of those who have been working on your behalf.

Let’s make this a convention that will not be soon forgotten as ECE works to leave its mark on the Adventist education system! Can’t wait to see you there!!!!!

Davenia

(more on Davenia on p. 4. I join her in looking forward to seeing many of you at the convention in August. There is still time to sign up. Contact your local conference superintendent for more information. Sue)
Learn the Signs. Act Early.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 1 in 88 children in the US has been identified as having an autism spectrum disorder (ASD), according to a new study that looked at data from 14 communities. Autism spectrum disorders are almost 5 times more common among boys than girls, with 1 in 54 boys identified.

The “Learn the Signs. Act Early.” program aims to improve early identification of children with autism and other developmental disabilities so children and families can get the services and support they need as early as possible.

From birth to 5 years, children reach milestones in how they play, learn, speak and act. A delay in any of these areas could be a sign of an ASD or other developmental disabilities.

CDC provides free materials to help parents and early educators track young children’s developmental milestones, tips for encouraging children’s growth and development, and information about what to do if there’s concern about a child’s development. Your center can add “Learn the Signs. Act Early” materials to your resources for parents. For more information call: 800-CDC-INFO. (Thanks, WA Early Learning Update)

---

### Did You Know That...

Eighty percent of the children in day care are from single mothers.

**May 11, 2012 is Child Care Provider Appreciation Day!**

**November 7-10, 2012 is the date for the annual NAEYC Convention**, to be held in Atlanta, GA

Approximately 6,000 are expected to attend the Nashville teachers’ convention.

There will be **450 breakout seminars** at the Nashville teachers’ convention.

---

### Tips for Special Kids with Special Needs

- Understand that a child with special needs has the same spiritual needs as other children.
- Talk with the parents about what can make the child feel more comfortable.
- Learn about the child’s special needs.
- Learn the child’s favorite songs, Bible stories, & activities.
- Use visuals—simply listening to stories is hard for a child with special needs.
- Stability and routine are crucial. Simple changes in routine can be traumatic.
- Remember that children with special needs are more like other children than they are different.
- Be aware that most curriculum and activities can be modified or adapted to involve all the children.
I am a minister.
I minister to the largest mission field in the world.
I minister to children.

My calling is sure. My challenge is big. My vision is clear. My desire is strong. My influence is eternal. My impact is critical. My values are solid. My faith is tested. My mission is urgent. My purpose is unmistakable. My direction is forward. My heart is genuine. My strength is supernatural. My reward is promised.
And my God is real.

In a world of cynicism, I offer hope.
In a world of confusion, I offer truth.
In a world of immorality, I offer values.
In a world of neglect, I offer attention.
In a world of abuse, I offer safety.
In a world of ridicule, I offer affirmation.
In a world of division, I offer reconciliation.
In a world of hate, I offer God’s love.

I refuse to be dismayed, disengaged, disgruntled, discouraged or distracted.
Neither will I look back, stand back, fall back, go back or sit back.
I do not need applause, flattery, adulation, prestige, stature or veneration.

I do not have time for “business as usual”, mediocre standards, small thinking, outdated methods, normal expectations, average results, ordinary ideas, petty disputes, or low vision.
I will not give up, give in, bail out, lie down, turn over, quit or surrender.

I will pray when things look bad. I will pray when things look good. I will move forward when others stand still.
I will trust God when obstacles arise. I will work when the task is overwhelming. I will get up when I fall down.

My calling is to reach boys and girls for God.
It is too serious to be taken lightly, too urgent to be postponed, too vital to be ignored, too relevant to be overlooked, too significant to be trivialized, too eternal to be fleeting and too passionate to be quenched.

I know my mission. I know my challenge.
I also know my limitations, my weaknesses, my fears and my problems.
And I know my God.

Let others get the praise. Let the church get the blessing. Let God get the glory.

I am a minister.
I minister to children.
This is who I am.
This is what I do.
Observation and Assessment: Gathering Data

Create portfolios of art, writings, photos, tapes, lists of favorite books providing a meaningful file of information that tracks a child’s development over time. Here are a few effective techniques:

- Frequently observe children performing typical tasks in comfortable circumstances.
- Jot down dated, brief objective notes (sticky notes, index cards) that can be transferred easily to files or folders.
- Keep recording materials readily available in several places around the classroom or in a pocket or fanny pack.

Collect samples of both spontaneous and structured work in the range of curricular objectives.

Observe how children:

- Use language in talking about themselves and interacting with others.
- Demonstrate their understanding of the function and conventional forms of written language.
- Use math concepts and skills in daily classroom life.
- Use language, writing, reading and math in demonstrating an understanding of science, social studies, the arts and physical education.

Plan for structured work samples collected during typical daily activities but at a designated time and place. A card game can indicate a child’s understanding of number concepts; a conversation about a story can gauge a child’s language and reasoning skills.

In early childhood programs, appropriate assessment:

- Reflects the ongoing life of the room and typical activities of the children.
- Avoids approaches that place children in artificial situations.
- Relies on demonstrated performance during real, not contrived activities.

Let’s Get Acquainted with Davenia...

From the moment I began my part-time job as a teacher’s assistant in a church operated daycare center, I knew I had a passion to work with young children.

That led me on a journey to study early childhood special education at the University of Maryland and to then work as an early interventionist, working with children, birth-age three, who had varying disabilities. I absolutely loved empowering the families of these young children as well as working to assist each child meet developmentally appropriate milestones. Every day was an adventure as I coordinated parent support groups, toddler groups, assessed children, made home visits and assisted to transition children into school-based programs.

I also enjoyed serving as a mentor for new teachers as well as for pre-service teachers. This led to my pursuit of obtaining a doctorate degree in early childhood special education. Since then I have worked at three universities, serving as an Assistant Professor in both special education and early childhood education, as the Director of Field Experiences and the Chair of the Education Department. We developed online education courses and also benefitted from grant funding in excess of one million dollars for our early childhood education program. I also served as the Dean of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies.

As I continue my work in the vineyard of education, it is my desire to maintain the awesome work on behalf of God’s children as I currently serve as the Associate Director of Early Childhood Education for the North American Division, Office of Education for the Seventh-day Adventist Church headquartered in Maryland.

One of my favorite Bible texts is Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope”. And it is with this promise that I face each day with excitement, expectancy, and hope. God has blessed me richly, professionally as well as personally, giving me a wonderful husband, Derrick, and two beautiful children, Jonathan and Morgan.

I believe that God has situated me “for such a time as this” to further make a difference in the lives of young children and I will continue to be His faithful and obedient servant, asking, like Samuel, “Speak Lord, your servant hears”.

Let’s Get Acquainted with Davenia...

From the moment I began my part-time job as a teacher’s assistant in a church operated daycare center, I knew I had a passion to work with young children.

That led me on a journey to study early childhood special education at the University of Maryland and to then work as an early interventionist, working with children, birth-age three, who had varying disabilities. I absolutely loved empowering the families of these young children as well as working to assist each child meet developmentally appropriate milestones. Every day was an adventure as I coordinated parent support groups, toddler groups, assessed children, made home visits and assisted to transition children into school-based programs.

I also enjoyed serving as a mentor for new teachers as well as for pre-service teachers. This led to my pursuit of obtaining a doctorate degree in early childhood special education. Since then I have worked at three universities, serving as an Assistant Professor in both special education and early childhood education, as the Director of Field Experiences and the Chair of the Education Department. We developed online education courses and also benefitted from grant funding in excess of one million dollars for our early childhood education program. I also served as the Dean of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies.

As I continue my work in the vineyard of education, it is my desire to maintain the awesome work on behalf of God’s children as I currently serve as the Associate Director of Early Childhood Education for the North American Division, Office of Education for the Seventh-day Adventist Church headquartered in Maryland.

One of my favorite Bible texts is Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope”. And it is with this promise that I face each day with excitement, expectancy, and hope. God has blessed me richly, professionally as well as personally, giving me a wonderful husband, Derrick, and two beautiful children, Jonathan and Morgan.

I believe that God has situated me “for such a time as this” to further make a difference in the lives of young children and I will continue to be His faithful and obedient servant, asking, like Samuel, “Speak Lord, your servant hears”.

Let’s Get Acquainted with Davenia...

From the moment I began my part-time job as a teacher’s assistant in a church operated daycare center, I knew I had a passion to work with young children.

That led me on a journey to study early childhood special education at the University of Maryland and to then work as an early interventionist, working with children, birth-age three, who had varying disabilities. I absolutely loved empowering the families of these young children as well as working to assist each child meet developmentally appropriate milestones. Every day was an adventure as I coordinated parent support groups, toddler groups, assessed children, made home visits and assisted to transition children into school-based programs.

I also enjoyed serving as a mentor for new teachers as well as for pre-service teachers. This led to my pursuit of obtaining a doctorate degree in early childhood special education. Since then I have worked at three universities, serving as an Assistant Professor in both special education and early childhood education, as the Director of Field Experiences and the Chair of the Education Department. We developed online education courses and also benefitted from grant funding in excess of one million dollars for our early childhood education program. I also served as the Dean of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies.

As I continue my work in the vineyard of education, it is my desire to maintain the awesome work on behalf of God’s children as I currently serve as the Associate Director of Early Childhood Education for the North American Division, Office of Education for the Seventh-day Adventist Church headquartered in Maryland.

One of my favorite Bible texts is Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope”. And it is with this promise that I face each day with excitement, expectancy, and hope. God has blessed me richly, professionally as well as personally, giving me a wonderful husband, Derrick, and two beautiful children, Jonathan and Morgan.

I believe that God has situated me “for such a time as this” to further make a difference in the lives of young children and I will continue to be His faithful and obedient servant, asking, like Samuel, “Speak Lord, your servant hears”. 