Dear Friends,

In a matter of days, the third North American Division Teachers’ Convention will convene in Nashville. **Who Will Be at the 2012 North American Division Teachers’ Convention?** Over 7000 educators from Seventh-day Adventist K-12 schools and early childhood centers representing over 900 K-12 schools and 400 early childhood centers in the United States, Canada, Bermuda and Guam.

Held every six years, this is the **FIRST time** this international convention has included early childhood directors/educators. **These are exciting times for Early Childhood Education!**

There will be over **twenty breakout sessions** designed with early childhood education in mind. Exhibitors have been informed to prepare for ECE colleagues.

On Monday, August 6 (9:45 am to 11:00) there will be an **EARLY CHILDHOOD general session** (Magnolia Ballroom).—an opportunity to **network** with early childhood providers from across the nation as well as Canada, Bermuda, and Guam—a chance to **meet** NAD Early Childhood leadership—a chance to **win** some great prizes.

Though a great number of our Northwest early childhood colleagues are registered, sadly, budget constraints are the main reasons many are not able to attend. In our next newsletter we plan to include several testimonials and first-hand accounts of just what transpired.

Please join me in praying for safe travel and inspiring experiences for all.

— Sue
**NPUC Early Childhood Registered Attendees**

(Please call or email me if you are registered but your name is missing below.
360-857-7031 or Sue.patzer@nw.npuc.org)

**ALASKA**
Ruth Atwood
Ashley Bailey

**IDAHO**
Jodi Giem
Melanie Lawson
Holly Moss
Vicky Ringerling
Martha States

**MONTANA**
Melanie Stroud

**OREGON**
Sarah Emery
Polly Johnson
Winnie Moses
Stacey Perry
Jennifer Siems
Pat Wister

**UPPER COLUMBIA**
Shani McConnachie
Tammy McIntyre
Golda Pflugrad
Geneva Vasquez
Betty Villarreal

**WASHINGTON**
Brigitte Arnette
Melinda Chase
Erin Conrad
Kelsie Curtis
Tammy Hammond
Jodi Kieffer
Jean McMahon
Arlene Salt
Angela Stroud
Teresa Tefts

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**THIS ‘n THAT About the Convention...**

**Meals covered by the registration fee:**

- Monday AUG 6 - breakfast, lunch and the reception/supper (spouses and children must be registered to attend).
- Tuesday AUG 7 - breakfast, lunch (supper on your own)
- Wednesday AUG 8 - breakfast only

**Business casual dress will be appropriate for all of the convention.**

**Be sure to visit with the hundreds of vendors and exhibitors for information and freebies:**

EXHIBIT HALL HOURS—
- Sunday, August 5
  3:00pm - 6:00pm
- Monday, August 6
  10:30am - 6:00pm
- Tuesday, August 7
  Noon - 8:00pm

**Amenities for the Gaylord Opryland Hotel include...**

- WiFi
- Iron/ironing board
- Coffee maker
- Hair dryer
- Indoor/outdoor swimming pools
- Fitness center
- ...And more!

(With 2800 rooms, it maybe helpful to see the virtual hotel walkthrough at their website)

**Inspiring worships and general sessions as well as evening performances by musical groups “The Isaacs” and “Committed”, and comedian Ken Davis.**
SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, AUGUST 5
6 am  Prayer Session
10 am-6:30 pm  Registration
3-6 pm  Exhibits Open
6:30-9 pm  Opening Session: Keynote Address-Carlton Byrd

MONDAY, AUGUST 6
6 am  Prayer Session
8-9:30 am  Worship: Dwight Nelson
9:45-11 am  Breakout Session 100
10:30 am-6 pm  Exhibits Open
11:15 am-12:30 pm  Breakout Session 200
12:30-2:30 pm  Lunch
2:30-3:30 pm  General Session: Todd Whitaker
3:45-5 pm  Breakout Session 300
5:15-6:45 pm  Evening Buffet
7-9 pm  Program/Entertainment

TUESDAY, AUGUST 7
6 am  Prayer Session
8-9:30 am  Worship: Dwight Nelson
8 am-4 pm  Blood Drive, Near Overflow Dining Area
9:45-11 am  General Session: Alan November
12-8 pm  Exhibits Open
11:15 am-12:30 pm  Breakout Session 400
12:30-2:30 pm  Lunch
2:30-3:30 pm  General Session: Ken Davis
3:45-5 pm  Breakout Session 500
5 pm  On your own

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 8
6 am  Prayer Session
8-9:30 am  Worship: Dwight Nelson
9:45-11 am  Breakout Session 600
11:15 am-12:15 pm  Commitment Service: Dan Jackson
Three BIG IDEAS...  
...For Addressing Preschool Language & Literacy Learning

Focusing on oral language, reading aloud, and language play put young children on the track to literacy. Since phase one of a child’s development, infancy through preschool, is characterized by awareness and exploration, the best way to grow language and literacy skills in young children is to focus on these three essentials, instead of structured sit down lessons, flashcard drills, and worksheets.

ORAL LANGUAGE

Begin with a foundation of oral language development. Conversation is a powerhouse for learning. Carefully guided conversations can impact children’s vocabulary, help them learn patience and empathy, and progress toward unlocking the alphabetic code. They can expand thinking and knowledge. Conversation stimulates core brain cells, which later become a foundation for the more complex connections needed to read.

- Carve out time each day for interesting, extended conversations using lots of different and complex words. Carefully place objects in centers to spark such discussions.
- Use talk to help young children explore and understand their world. Encourage the inquisitive. Honor honest questions with a thoughtful, thorough response.
- Help children tell stories as they view pictures, share something important to them, and answer questions in complete, complex sentences.

READING ALOUD

Partner conversations with read-aloud time. The more naturally you share a story, the more engaged the children will be.

- Preview and pre-read each book carefully. Ask yourself, “What questions might arise in my children’s minds? What might they be interested in learning more about?”
- Read aloud often to your whole class, but also interact with books in small groups or with individuals. Invite parents in to share a picture book.
- Pause from time to time for mini discussions. Use the magic words, “Let’s see what happens next” if you find conversation straying too far.

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS (playing with language)

This happens best through playful interactive experiences—no structured sit down lessons. Recent research indicates that as little as 15 -20 minutes three times a week is all that is needed to grow phonological awareness. Between conversations, reading aloud, and playing with language, there are plenty of ways to make this a natural part of each day.

To find the proper emphasis, one first needs to understand the developmental spectrum of phonological awareness. Phonological awareness moves from understanding larger parts of language (sentences, words, syllables) to smaller and smaller portions/sounds within words.

Children must first grasp the earlier levels. When we move to too deep a level without the necessary foundation, children might “parrot” responses you expect because they want to please, but they do not gain understanding that moves them cognitively to the next level.

- If a child has trouble rhyming, step back. He might need to learn to listen. Use familiar environmental sounds. Does a train whistle sound the same as a dog barking? Once children get the idea, they can transfer that abstract thinking to smaller sounds with words (the “at” in “cat” and “bat”). Be patient. Up until now young children have been thinking about whole words for meaning.
- If a child has had limited experience with rich oral language and having stories read to her, she might need more explicit help. Let the child see or feel how your mouth moves when you say a pair of rhyming words. Isolate or over-emphasize the rhyming part so it’s easier for her to hear.
- Still not getting it? Recommend an evaluation by a specialist. Sometimes ear infections or frequent allergies can affect auditory abilities. Other times, a child might have a processing problem that when diagnose early, can respond well to intervention.

Excerpts from an article by Cathy Puett Miller  Dedicated to promoting literacy, Cathy is a monthly columnist in Education World’s Professional Development area. Besides leading TLA, Inc. (The Literacy Ambassador), she is author of several books.