ECEC News—

Recent K-12 Advisory Meetings: Implications for ECEC

Presentation of the Encounter Bible Curriculum: The new SDA curriculum for Australia and New Zealand was recently introduced. The foundation is heart transformations; inquiry based teaching, learning and engagement. The concepts, activities and teaching strategies could be applicable to ECEC.

NAD Committees and Taskforces: In an effort to provide services and resources across the Division that meet the needs of all, committees and/or taskforces are sometimes established. It is the desire of the NAD that these entities have representation from higher education, secondary, elementary and ECEC, and representatives will be sought to serve.

Professional Development: An NAD committee will convene this spring to examine PD across the Division. The committee will be comprised of representatives from each Union as well as from higher education, secondary, elementary and ECEC. If someone in the ECEC field has the passion, knowledge and skills in the area of PD, please contact me. (Sue)

Assessment: An Assessment Taskforce was established in September and the first meeting was held in October 2012. The taskforce will meet again in March 2013.

REACH Advisory: This Advisory serves to address the needs of children with disabilities and/or learning challenges across the Division. If someone in the ECEC field has the passion, knowledge and skills as it pertains to inclusive practices, please contact me. (Sue)

Resources: A representative from Learn360 presented their multimedia resource for teachers and students. “Learn360’s library provides an array of multi-media assets that have been selected for their educational content and top-quality production. Learn360 provides 24/7 access to the most current media library.” There may be features that are relevant to Pre-k and Pre-k/K teachers. Check it out, you have a trial access until December 31st.

Here is your trial account. (Pre-k teachers, please give your feedback)
User ID: adventistteacher Password: learn www.learn360.com

A representative from Handwriting Without Tears presented their handwriting curriculum. For more information: http://www.hwtears.com/hwt.

“Let the little children come to Me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.”
Luke 18:16
Why Younger Kids Have More ADHD

Studies show that an ADHD diagnosis may simply signify a lack of maturity

Published on November 19, 2012 by Marilyn Wedge, Ph.D. in Suffer the Children

A child may well have an important advantage if he is one of the oldest in his classroom instead of being among the youngest. Several new studies indicate that many children are being diagnosed with ADHD because they are among the youngest in their classroom. A study from Iceland that tracked nearly 12,000 children, found that children in the youngest third of their class were fifty per cent more likely to be diagnosed with ADHD and medicated with ADHD medications. The study found that being younger relative to one’s classmates affects a child’s academic performance all through school.

According to two other studies, reported in Scientific American (August, 2012), a child who is easily distracted, fidgety or disruptive in the classroom does not necessarily have ADHD. Instead, these behaviors might mean simply that the child is acting his own age. Children who are a year or even six months older than their classmates have had more time to develop their attention span and ability to sit still. So if a child's birthday is close to the cutoff date for enrollment in kindergarten, parents might want to think about giving him an extra year to mature.

According to Professor Melinda Morrill of North Carolina State University, “younger children may be mistakenly diagnosed as having ADHD, when in fact they are simply less mature.” ADHD diagnosis rates are significantly different for children who are among the oldest, rather than the youngest, in their class. She finds that being young for his grade more than doubles the child’s chance of being diagnosed with ADHD.

A child who starts kindergarten at a younger age also has a greater chance of having to take ADHD medications like Ritalin later on. Professor Todd Elder (Michigan State University) comments that if a child is inattentive or can't sit still, it may simply be because the child is 5 and the other kids in his classroom are 6. These "symptoms" often signify immaturity instead of a "mental disorder" like ADHD.

Parents need to be aware that ADHD has become a kind of catch all diagnosis for many sorts of differences among children. This includes a child’s normal lack of maturity as compared to older children in the same classroom.

A Canadian study (University of British Columbia) focused on children in a province where the cutoff age for school entry is December 31. The results were published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal. Researchers found that kids with December birthdays were 48 per cent more likely to be diagnosed with ADHD, and given medication, compared to children with January birthdays.

The Canadian researchers stressed that there are significant health risks associated with a wrong diagnosis of ADHD. Kids who take ADHD medications (known as stimulants) have a higher risk of sleep disruption, increased risk of heart problems and slower growth rates. These kids are also exposed to social issues, since teachers, parents and peers may perceive them negatively.

Liz Didcock is the lead mental health expert at the Royal College of Pediatrics and Child Health, She says that the Canadian study “reminds us of the importance of understanding behavior in its context.” Like many doctors in the U. S. and the U. K., Dr. Didcock is concerned about the increasing potential for “over-medicalization” of normal childhood behavior.

Besides decreasing your child’s chances of being labeled with ADHD, waiting to enroll a child in kindergarten has another important advantage. In his best seller Outliers, author Malcolm Gladwell points out that having a January-April birthday is correlated with higher academic achievement. Kids whose birthdays fall in these months are among the oldest in their class. In a study of fourth graders taking the TIMSS (math and science tests given to many children around the world), the oldest children scored significantly better than the youngest children. Older kids were also more likely to be placed in a higher ability grouping where they learned better skills.

So even if your child has the ability to enter kindergarten, his maturity as compared to the other children in his classroom is an important factor to consider. Allowing a child extra time to mature may give him a significant advantage for his emotional development as well as an academic edge. It might also prevent him from getting a diagnosis of ADHD

SAVE the DATE!!!  June 23—24, 2013

2nd NW Early Childhood Workshop—Ridgefield, WA
Of Interest to Parents... The Gratefulness Principle

Gratitude increases closeness in relationships. As you parent your children, look for opportunities to take advantage of gratefulness to draw closer to your kids. Give your children small gifts of love day after day. Be careful, though, that you don’t confuse the gratefulness principle with the overindulgence trap.

Some parents, wanting their children to like them, recognize giving gifts opens the heart, so they overdo it by giving them too many things. Giving to your kids must be tied into relationship, or the gifts feed selfishness instead of gratefulness. Overindulgence is giving your children more than their character can handle. When children lack gratitude, then the more you give them, the less they appreciate. Parents must restrain themselves or they’ll exceed their children’s ability to manage the blessings.

Overindulged children rarely become grateful when you give them more things. They grow to be more demanding and selfish. Parents then feel unappreciated and become resentful. The hearts of both parents and children harden toward each other, and closeness becomes a thing of the past. If your children become overindulged rather than grateful, then pull back on the area where you’re giving too much. Look for creative ways to give differently to your child. Teaching the heart gratefulness can be a challenge. Having a child say thank you is just behavior. Gratefulness comes from the heart.

Monitor your child’s response to gifts of love to determine if you’re growing gratitude or overindulgence. As gratefulness increases, you can slowly give blessings in a way that will produce more gratefulness. You’ll know if you’re moving too quickly by your child’s response.

Parenting is Heart Work by Dr Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN, BSN.

Getting to Know...Brigette Arnett

Brigette was born in Spokane, WA but grew up in Powell, WY, very close to Yellowstone Park (where she spent a great deal of growing up time). Before moving to Washington Brigette earned a Bachelor’s degree in Social Work from Union College, in Lincoln, NE. Married in 2001, Brigette and her husband Steve, have two sons, Payton, a third grader, and Isaac, a second grader.

Being director of Loving To Learn Child Development Center is Brigette’s first job in child care, one that she has held since 2009. “My employment history primarily includes working with adolescents and their families.” Brigette has a great deal of program and clinical management experience. She has also been a business owner, an adolescent counselor, and has served as a Guardian Ad Litem to a Washington State Superior Court, providing recommendations for the best interest of children involved in custody matters.

“I love working with children and their families and doing what I can to facilitate success in the children and in the family unit. Located in Auburn, Washington, on the campus of Auburn Adventist Academy, next to Buena Vista Elementary School, my favorite thing about our program is that we have the opportunity to be a part of a campus that provides Adventist education from 12 months old through high school. Between our preschool and school age program (serving children 12 mos. to 12 years), we serve approximately 40 children.”

When asked to name a favorite thing about her job, Brigette commented, “I work with such a great team who make coming to work a joy! That is just the icing on the cake, as I truly enjoy the children and their families. Knowing that we are a vital part in the development of these children is such an awesome responsibility! We do not take it lightly, that the purpose of our job revolves around these precious children the Lord has entrusted to our care. They are so much fun, and each little person brings so much light to our lives.”

Brigette continued, “I would love to see EC valued more among the educational community. Regardless of our personal perspectives, the reality is that most families have to put their children in care in order to make a living. Our job is so very, very important for we are the beginning of the development and educational building blocks. I am thrilled that we were included in the teachers’ convention in Nashville this year and believe we are working in the right direction!”
Getting to Know...Teresa Tefts

Though she was raised in California, Teresa was born in Mexico. She says, “It was hard learning to speak English in kindergarten. School was always hard without support with school work at home. It is by the grace of God that my brothers, sister and I graduated from high school. Out of nine children, only three of us went on beyond high school.”

“We all are very family-oriented. When time permits, I enjoy hiking, and taking long walks in the woods or at the beach.”

“I have been very blessed to truly enjoy every job I’ve ever had. I have learned from every job and have taken those lessons with me, to strengthen the next job.” This is Teresa’s second year at Lewis County Adventist School Preschool, located in Centralia, Washington, where she serves as director and teacher. “I feel honored and take it very seriously that I am at the beginning of these little ones’ lives. Their parents have put their trust in us to not only educate their children academically but to show by example the sweet love of Jesus each day.”

“The best thing about what I do is watching a child fall in love with God. When I’m telling them stories about heaven, they sometimes get so excited that they start shouting questions like ‘can we ride the lion and he won’t bite us?’. Holding back the tears that swell up, I say, ‘Yes, sweetie, you can ride the lion and he will not bite you.’ ‘Like in Daniel and the lions’ den?’ they ask. ‘Yes, just like that.’ They love to act out the stories in costume.”

During the month of November the preschoolers just didn’t learn about turkeys, they learned about the persecution that led the Pilgrims to leave England and seek a new life in America. Parents expressed being impressed at the learning that had occurred. Teresa continues, “For our upcoming Christmas program, one of our little guys who has just learned to love Jesus has been diligently practicing his lines with the help of his parents who are un-churched.” (The thought: “A little child shall lead them”, seems to fit here.) Teresa adds, “I love my job!”

And does Teresa have any Christmas wishes for ECE? “I would really like to pursue further education in the EC field and I’d be so grateful if scholarships were available for this. I also hope that there will come a time in the near future when EC educators receive health benefits.”
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION & CARE

Dedicated to the early development of children through guided discovery and inspired instruction.

VISIT the new NAD Early Childhood Education and Care Website.

FIND information, opportunities, and resources.

CONNECT with others across North America, Canada, Bermuda and Guam!

Connect Today! Visit ecec.nadeducation.org
Blessings in 2013 from me and mine to YOU and YOURS!

Sue

CONGRATULATIONS to Cascade Christian Childcare and Preschool in Wenatchee, for being one of three centers across the North American Division to be chosen to receive $1000 from the “Live the Mission” Early Childhood Grant.

CCCP Staff Manager, Crystal Johnson, who submitted the application stated how the funds will be used: 

...our facility and the number of children we serve has increased dramatically...growth also means that we must be diligent in updating our systems so that safe and effective communication can be maintained throughout the center.

Unfortunately our current intercom/phone system is inadequate to the size of our facility. A center wide intercom/phone system allows the staff and administrative teams to communicate immediately with each other without diverting the staff’s attention away from their greatest priority, the children. With funds from the grant, we would be able to upgrade our phone/intercom system.

Crystal adds, “This project is expected to be completed by staff employees around January of 2013.”

TIMELY RESOURCES...

In the wake of the tragedy in Connecticut...many will have questions, concerns, and fears that will need to be dealt with. Here are some helpful resources for guiding how to respond:

An Exchange article by Diane Levin: 
“When the World is a Dangerous Place — Helping Children Deal with Violence in the News.”

A New York Times article, 
“Tips for Talking to Children About the Shooting.”

Advice from National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 
“Talking to Children about the Shooting.”

Advice from the National Association of School Psychologists, 
“A National Tragedy: Helping Children Cope.”

A resource from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 
“Tips for Talking to Children and Youth after Traumatic Events.”

Fred Rogers’ advice from Family Communications, 
“Helping Children Deal with Tragic Events in the News.”

Advice from the American Psychological Association, 
“Helping Your Children Manage Distress in the Aftermath of a Shooting.”

Article from Young Child Ministries, 
Children and Grief

THANKS, Christine Gillan Byrne, Ed. D.
ECEC, Pacific Union Conference of SDA

Blessings in 2013 from me and mine to YOU and YOURS!

Sue