



PARENT NEWSLETTER

www.childandfamilyopp.org

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PARENT ENGAGEMENT

We at CFO believe the quality of our programs is enhanced through parent input and participation. Volunteering in the classroom and attending parent meetings regularly are important ways to support your child's program, but there may be other ways to volunteer:

- Making sure your child attends Head Start regularly.
- Transporting your child and/or other children to and from the Center.
- Participating in home visits with Head Start staff.
- Participating in Parent Group at the Center.
- Attending Parent Activity opportunities.
- Following through with activities at home to enhance your child's classroom program.
- Helping distribute parent newsletters and notices.
- Preparing activities for the classroom.
- Taking an application to a friend.
- Becoming a member of the Parent Policy Council.
- Becoming a Health Services Advisory or Child Development Committee member.

We would love to hear your ideas on how you would like to volunteer your time and talents. Please share them with your center staff.



HEAD START ENROLLMENT

It is not too late for parents to apply, as there are still openings for qualifying families in some of our Centers. The Central Office in Ellsworth maintains a waiting list throughout the year and when a vacancy occurs, applications are reviewed according to state and federal guidelines; then a slot is offered to a child on the waiting list.

CHILD CARE ENROLLMENT

We still have openings in all of our center and I/T openings in some centers. Please call for more information today!

If you know of anyone in your area who has a child who might be interested in Head Start or child care, encourage them to apply. Your center staff has applications, or you can contact the Ellsworth Office at 667-2995 or 1-800-834-4378 and we will mail one to you. Need help filling out the application? We would be happy to help in any way we can!



CFO is moving up in the digital world we have just created new Facebook and Twitter pages! You may 'Like' us on Facebook or 'Follow' us on Twitter.

For more information go to our Parent Resources tab on our website:

<http://www.childandfamilyopp.org/parent-resources/>

HEATING & UTILITIES SERVICES

Heating Assistance These programs provide heating assistance to low-income households, including Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and Energy Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP).

THAW This community fund helps people with low incomes who are having difficulty paying home energy bills.

Heating System Upgrade Repair or replace dangerous, malfunctioning, or inoperable heating appliances or systems. **For information or to make an appointment to apply, call WHCA at 207-664-2424 or 207-546-7544 or 1-800-828-7544. On the web go to: www.whcacap.org/utilities**



What is DIAL-3 Screening?

CFO provides developmental screening for each preschool child within 45 days of the child's entry into the program. Our staff uses a tool called the DIAL-3. It is divided into three sections: Concepts, Language, and Motor. There is also an important component for looking at children's social and emotional development using a questionnaire completed by parents.

Completing a developmental screening helps staff assess each child's strengths, as well as areas of concern. However, screening results are just one way we get to know your child. Talking with parents to gain a better understanding of each child is another very valuable part of our initial assessment. With this knowledge, as well as our own observations, we may also identify children who could benefit from further early intervention services, and will work together with parents to provide the most beneficial, supportive program for each child.

Along with parents, Head Start staff will work to create individual plans for each child, enabling teachers and parents to provide activities and experiences for children based on their strengths and interests, as well as needs. Again, we look for parents' insight - we know you are the experts regarding your children. We are looking forward to the weeks and months ahead as we get to know you and your children, and working together to create the best possible program for children. Together we will talk about your child's growth and learning in the following ways:



Speech and Language Development refers to a child's abilities to:

- . use words
- . remember words to a song
- . listen and understand
- . follow simple directions
- . talk a long time with friends
- . enjoy books



Gross Motor Development refers to a child's abilities to:

- . walk run and jump
- . catch and throw
- . balance
- ride a tricycle

Fine Motor Development refers to a child's abilities to:

- . button and zip
- . pour and use eating utensils
- . use scissors and writing utensils
- . lacing cards
- . picking up small objects - like puzzle pieces and legos



Cognitive Development (Concepts): refers to a child's abilities to:

- . ask and answer questions
- . make up stories
- . explore things around him/her
- . plan ahead
- . think up solutions to a problem
- . be creative
- . see that things are alike and different
- . put things in order
- . understand time and the order of events
- . name and sort shapes, colors and objects
- . see that people do different things in the community
- . count and understand numbers
- . recognize written names
- . remember words to songs and stories
- . follow simple directions



Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ)

For infants and toddlers enrolled in our programs, Caregivers and parents work in partnership to complete the **AGES & STAGES QUESTIONNAIRE. (ASQ)** The questionnaires are utilized for comprehensive screening and monitoring progress of infants' and toddlers' overall development. Like the DIAL-3 screening, the ASQ is helpful in looking at young children's development across several developmental domains (Communication, Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Problem-Solving, and Personal-Social.)

Because of the rapid patterns of development for children from birth – three, it is helpful to complete screenings more frequently. Ages & Stages Questionnaires are completed with parents every 2 months for children 4 months of age – 24 months, then in 3 month intervals between the ages of 2 and 3. Parents' insight and observations regarding their young children's development are key to the success of screening & monitoring utilizing the ASQ.



A Word about Curriculum

Curriculum at our Centers is based on the individual growth and development of each child. Teachers observe children to discover their interests and then plan accordingly. Children learn by doing and through active involvement with their environment and responsive, nurturing adults.

Staff and parents are involved in developing the curriculum, which is posted in the classroom. Your ideas are welcomed, valued and included in this process. Please let us know if you have any suggestions, ideas or special talents you would like to see made available to the children while they are attending CFO programs.



CIRCUIT BREAKER RENT OR PROPERTY TAX REFUND FOR MAINE RESIDENTS FOR 2010 PAYMENTS

You may qualify for a refund of up to \$1,600 if:

- You have a spouse or dependent and your 2010 income was \$61,400 or less; or
- You do not have a spouse or dependent and your 2009 household income was \$81,850 or less

AND

- Your property tax was more than 4% of your 2010 household income; or
- The rent you paid in 2010 was more than 20% of your household income.



Applications and more information are available on line at
<http://www.maine.gov/revenue/taxrelief/tnr.htm>
Or call (207) 626-8475 for more information

Healthy Kids, Healthy Families

Physical activity builds a great foundation for a healthy life. It's a win-win event for you and your child.

It can:

- Increase self-esteem and capacity for learning.
- Help kids handle stress
- Build and maintain healthy bones, muscles and joints.
- Help keep kids at a healthy weight.

Create family traditions and lasting memories. Time together is time treasured.

Family Adventure: See the sights of your community. Try hiking, fishing, canoeing, and berry-picking. Discover the public parks. Explore outdoor tourist attractions.

Community Service: Benefit others while benefiting yourself—volunteer as a family. Help neighbors rake their yard or team up to clean a favorite park.

The Gift of Physical Activity: Give a present that encourages activity. Select toys that make kids move, such as balls or a bicycle. Stash a box in the family car that holds balls, a Frisbee, jump rope, kite, etc. You'll always be ready to stop for fun! Be sure box is out of reach and secure while driving for child's safety.

Household Jobs: Encourage responsibility and home maintenance skills by having your children help.

Indoor Fun: Designate a safe space where kids can roll, climb, jump, dance, and tumble.

Seasonal Celebrations: Welcome each one with fun!

Fall—Go on a hike, collect colorful leaves or play Frisbee.

Winter—Go sledding or build a snowman.

Spring—Play whiffle ball or fly a kite.

Summer —Run through the sprinkler or jump rope.

IS YOUR CHILD IS READY TO TOILET TRAIN ?

by Vicki Lansky [A Practical Guide to Daytime and Nighttime Training](#)

From the time your child is about 2 (though it may be nearer to 3 for some), you should watch for signs of readiness for training. If certain signs are clearly present, and the child is basically past the negative "no-to-every-request" stage, he or she is probably ready.

You'll know your child is ready when he or she:

- Is aware of the "need to go," and shows it by facial expression or by telling you.
- Can express and understand one-word statements, including such words as "wet," "dry," "**potty**," and "go."
- Demonstrates imitative behavior.

- Dislikes wet or **dirty diapers**. (Don't confuse this with your level of discomfort or inconvenience.)
- Is able to stay dry for at least two hours or wakes up dry after a nap.
- Is able to pull elastic waist pants up and down.
- Is anxious to please you.
- Has a sense of social "appropriateness" (wet pants can be an embarrassment).
- Tells you he or she is about to go. (Praise such statements to set the stage for a child who wishes to please you by **learning** to use the toilet or potty.)
- Asks to use the potty chair or adult toilet! ❁



October is Fire-Safety Month

Does your family have a home fire escape plan? If not, make one today; start by walking through your home and finding two ways out of every area. Then practice the escape plan with your family; remember to designate an outdoor meeting place where everyone in the family can be accounted for. Put your escape plan to the test twice a year, that way if a real fire happens everyone will know what to do.

Your home should have smoke alarms on every level (even the basement) – it is especially important to have them inside or near every sleeping area. Smoke alarms should be replaced about every 10 years. If no one can remember how old it is, it is time for a replacement. Never paint or decorate a smoke alarm, even with stickers, this may keep it from working properly. Make sure everyone knows the alarm sounds – when the alarm sounds, get out and follow your escape plan. Here are some hints to keep fires from starting:

- If food is cooking on the stove, keep a watchful eye. Remember to keep the stove clear of anything that could catch on fire – paper, towels or potholders.
- Make the area around the stove a “kid-free zone” – this goes for pets too!
- Make sure to always turn off portable heaters when you leave the room. Keep heaters three feet from anything that can burn – walls, bedding, curtains, or clothing.
- Likewise, make sure to blow out candles when you leave the room. Be sure that candleholders are big and deep enough to catch dripping wax. Most important: never have candles in children’s bedrooms.
- Keep matches and lighters out of children’s reach, preferably in a locked cabinet.
- Any fuel or liquid that can catch on fire, like gasoline, propane, or kerosene should be kept in a safe container, outside the home in a garage or locked shed.
- **All CFO programs practice monthly fire drills at each center.**

DANGEROUS DEHUMIDIFIERS

RECALLED: Goldstar & Comfort-Aire dehumidifiers. The power connector for the dehumidifiers compressor can short circuit, posing fire and burn hazards. There have been 16 incidents, including 9 significant house fires since 2009. The fires caused more than \$1 million in property damage.

Anyone who has the recalled dehumidifiers is strongly encouraged to immediately unplug and stop using them, and contact LG Electronics for immediate free

repair. The units are 30 -pint portable dehumidifiers with a red shut-off button. For model and serial numbers included, check the firm’s website at www.30pintdehumidifierrecall.com or call toll free at (877) 220-0479 between 8 am and 7 pm.

The dehumidifiers were sold at Home Depot, Walmart, Ace Hardware, and other retailers nationwide from January 2007 through June 2008 for about \$150. They were manufactured in China.

RECALLED: SOFT DOLLS FROM POTTERYBARN KIDS—CHLOE, SOPHIE AND AUDREY

The hair on Chloe and Sophie dolls have loops that are large enough to fit around a child's neck and head; the headband on the Audrey doll can form a loop that fits around a child's head and neck. The loops can pose a strangulation hazard. The dolls were sold at Pottery Barn Kids stores and online from July 2006 to April 2011 for about \$40. If you have the dolls immediately take from children and cut the looped hair and/or remove the headband to eliminate the hazard. Contact Pottery Barn for instructions on how to return the dolls for a credit at (855) 880-4504 or check the website at www.potterybarnkids.com

RECALLED: PLAYSAFE DARTMOUTH SWING SET

The sling-style swing seats can crack or split prematurely, posing a fall hazard to consumers. The recall is for model number 22-PS340 with codes FSD0115AA or FSD0315AA. They were sold exclusively at Toys R Us nationwide from January 2011 to May 2011 for about \$270. Immediately stop using, the swings, remove the seats and contact Pacific Cycle at (877) 564-2261. The firm's web site and email are www.pacific-cycle.com customerservice@pacific-cycle.com.

RECALLED: SCOOT 'N ZOOM RIDING TOY FROM RADIO FLYER

The riding toy can tip over and cause a child to fall. The toy is red molded plastic with black wheels; the model number is 711 (not 711B). It was sold at Walmart and other retailers and online from Aug 2010 through Aug 2011. For more information or to receive a replacement toy, call (800) 621-7613 or go to their website at www.radioflyer.com.

RECALLED: STEP STOOLS WITH STORAGE FROM TARGET CORPORATION

The wooden step stools can break apart and/or collapse on the user, causing a fall. The recall is for the Circo step stool and the Do Your Room stepstool with storage. There are many dates and UPC numbers included in this recall. Check online at Target.com or contact Target by phone at (800)440-0680. Immediately stop using the stools. They can be returned to any Target store for a full refund.

FOR MORE RECALLS:

Check our Parent Resources Tab on our website: <http://www.childandfamilyopp.org/parent-resources/>

URGENT!

Bargain Item Safety Considerations

Many of us look for bargains in the form of recycled items at yard sales, secondhand stores or from friends and relatives. Some of these money savers may be false bargains if they are accidents waiting to happen. Parents of infants and toddlers need to take care, especially with drop-side, cribs, bassinets and play yards.

Other products to avoid include accordion-style safety gates, bean bag chairs that can be opened, clothing with drawstrings around the neck or head. Drawstrings at the waist should be no more than 3 inches long. To check notices on children's products or other consumer items visit the web site at www.cpsc.gov. The National Association of Resale and Thrift Shops web site has more information about safe sleeping for infants at cribsafety.jpma.org/node/20