



## OUR TEAM

COMINGS AND GOINGS

CCRR would like to welcome **Carmen Hernandez** as our new Child Care Counselor, **Michele Irwin** as our new Fiscal Coordinator, and **Alice Rosado** as our new Legally Exempt Enrollment Assistant.



## MEMBERSHIP

DEMONSTRATE YOUR COMMITMENT TO QUALITY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION SERVICES

The children of Rockland County need us now more than ever. If you are not familiar with the benefits of becoming a CCRR member, please take a moment to read over the following. We are here for you so we may all be here for our children.

Your membership will bring you:

- Discounted fees for on-site staff training and technical assistance
- Reduced admission to conferences, workshops and seminars
- Discounted fees for resource and referral services
- Access to our Lending Library which is packed with books, videos, and toys you can take home with you
- Health insurance options

Your membership dollars help to:

- Increase community awareness of child care needs
- Educate government and businesses on the importance of supporting child care
- Provide training and technical assistance for development and expansion of child care programs

With your support, CCRR will be able to meet the challenges ahead and continue to be a statewide leader in early care and education services. Please renew your membership today and show your support for the children and families of Rockland County.

## SAVE THE DATE



Join Us On  
**Monday, May 12, 2008**  
for the first  
**Golfing FORE! Children**  
at the New York Country Club

Raffles, Auction, Prizes, Hole In One Contests, Beat the Pro, Outback Steakhouse Challenge and more! Come to golf, 11am shotgun start, or stop by and enjoy the cocktail reception. Golf outing co-sponsored by CCRR and VCS Inc.

**Annual Meeting**  
**Friday, June 6, 2008**

Come join business leaders, educators and elected officials of Rockland County in an exciting, thought provoking discussion about balancing work and family needs in our community.

**35th Annual Early**  
**Childhood/School Age Conference**  
**Saturday, November 1, 2008**

Participate in workshops for infant, toddler, pre-school and school age staff and providers, as well as directors and parents. Please call 845-425-0009 x0 for details.

For more information on the events above please contact Deanna D'Auria at 845-425-0009 x616 or [deannad@rocklandchildcare.org](mailto:deannad@rocklandchildcare.org)

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

**Q:** I have heard that there has been a change in the regulations concerning reporting suspicions of child abuse and maltreatment? What will that mean for my program?



**A:** Yes, the regulations regarding reporting suspicions of child abuse and maltreatment have changed effective October 1, 2007. Before, regulations stated that a staff member in a child care program who had reasonable cause to suspect child abuse and maltreatment was required to "immediately notify the person in charge ... who then shall become responsible to report or cause a report to be made." Staff in child care programs were required to report their suspicions to their director and the director was then required to make the call to the Statewide Central Registry of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR).

SCR had some problems with this procedure. They were concerned about the accuracy of the information and the timeliness of the reports. As a result of these concerns, the regulations were changed. Under the new regulation, "mandated reporters who work for a child care program and who have direct knowledge of any allegation of suspected child abuse and maltreatment, must personally make a report to the SCR and then notify the person in charge of the program." It is now the staff person who must make the call to the SCR and not the director. The staff person is required to inform the director that a call was made, and the director is then "responsible for all subsequent internal administration necessitated by the report."

Center directors should have received an official letter with this information. CCRR can send you a copy if you did not receive one and want one for your files.

Most child care centers will need to change their staff policies regarding the reporting of child abuse and maltreatment in light of this regulatory change. This new regulation will also be discussed in CCRR's workshops on child abuse and maltreatment. A workshop for directors on changing their reporting policy will be offered in the upcoming Summer/Fall Training Calendar. Centers can also arrange for on site workshops for their staff by calling Debbie at 845-425-0009 x459.

(This content was adapted from an article in the January-February 2008 Child Care Solutions Connection newsletter).

Do you have a question for our Q&A column?

Send it attention Newsletter to:

E-mail: [info@rocklandchildcare.org](mailto:info@rocklandchildcare.org)

Fax: 845-425-5312

Mail: 235 North Main St., Suite 11  
Spring Valley NY 10977

Check out our  
**NEW and IMPROVED**  
Website!

[www.childcarerockland.org](http://www.childcarerockland.org)

 Cut Out and Post!

## CCRR CLOSING INFORMATION

May 26 - Memorial Day

July 4 - Independence Day

### SAVE THE DATE

May 12 - Golfing FORE! Children  
June 6 - CCRR Annual Meeting  
November 1 - 35th Annual Early  
Childhood/School Age Conference

### CCRR STAFF DIRECTORY

<b>Jane Brown</b> <i>Executive Director</i>	417	<b>June Pizzolo</b> <i>Family Child Care Coordinator</i>	418
<b>Gwen Brown-Murray</b> <i>Coordinator of Special Needs Services</i>	613	<b>Vivian Reemer</b> <i>Universal Pre-kindergarten Coordinator</i>	424
<b>Deanna D'Auria</b> <i>Events &amp; Publications Coordinator</i>	616	<b>Maria Rivas</b> <i>Program Specialist</i>	455
<b>David Del Campo</b> <i>Program Specialist</i>	451	<b>Kit Saiz de la Mora</b> <i>Program Specialist</i>	223
<b>Judy Fiumano</b> <i>Nutritionist</i>	422	<b>Alice Rosado</b> <i>Legally Exempt Enrollment Assistant</i>	495
<b>Carol Ann Galiszuski</b> <i>Program Specialist</i>	217	<b>Karen Ross</b> <i>Administrative Services Director</i>	630
<b>Debby Gilchrist</b> <i>Administrative Assistant Library Coordinator</i>	620	<b>Edna Saravia</b> <i>Family Child Care Program Specialist</i>	475
<b>Kathleen Guterl</b> <i>Contracts Manager</i>	662	<b>Marcia Scheer</b> <i>Deputy Director</i>	458
<b>Erin Healy</b> <i>Administrative Assistant Fingerprinting Coordinator</i>	487	<b>Gerd Schubert</b> <i>Fiscal Director</i>	615
<b>Carmen Hernandez</b> <i>Child Care Counselor</i>	494	<b>Debbie Silver</b> <i>Director of Professional Development</i>	459
<b>Michele Irwin</b> <i>Fiscal Coordinator</i>	610	<b>Arlene Thomas-Strand</b> <i>Child Care Counselor</i>	661
<b>Juliet Lewis</b> <i>NORSAC Director</i>	614	<b>Susan Torres-Bender</b> <i>Media Project Coordinator</i>	419
<b>Yolanda Michel</b> <i>CACFP Coordinator</i>	423	<b>Elaine Trotta</b> <i>Provider Services Director</i>	421
<b>Ellen Mitchell</b> <i>Program Specialist</i>	456	<b>Jenine Valentino</b> <i>UPK Assistant</i>	460
<b>Teresa Olander</b> <i>Child Care Health Specialist</i>	493	<b>Edna Ward</b> <i>Family Assistance Coordinator</i>	221
<b>Teresa Ortega</b> <i>Family Child Care Program Specialist</i>	633	<b>Kate Wysokowski</b> <i>Work/Family &amp; Development Director</i>	612
<b>Ines Ortiz</b> <i>Legally Exempt Enrollment Coordinator</i>	411		

PHONE 845-425-0009 FAX 845-425-5312  
WEBSITE [www.childcarerockland.org](http://www.childcarerockland.org) EMAIL [info@rocklandchildcare.org](mailto:info@rocklandchildcare.org)



## SPECIAL NEEDS SERVICES

We are excited to be launching an inclusive care training series aimed at improving our ability to service children with varying needs in our center and home-based child care programs. Informational letters were sent out, applications were received, and the following programs have been selected by lottery to participate in this pilot program:

Campus Fun & Learn Child Development Center  
Kathleen Hargot, Family Child Care Provider  
Head Start of Rockland / Spring Valley  
Itsy Bitsy Toes Day Care

Nyack's Little Schoolhouse  
Palisades Schoolhouse Child Care Center  
St. Paul's Christian Day School  
Tops for Tots Children's Center

The first set of workshops will run from April through June. On-site technical assistance will be offered as part of the training. We are looking forward to helping programs better meet the needs of all children in our community. For more information please contact Gwen Brown-Murray at extension 613 or [gwenb@rocklandchildcare.org](mailto:gwenb@rocklandchildcare.org).

## NAEYC ACCREDITATION SUCCESS! YOU CAN DO IT TOO!

When Christa Sampath, the owner and director of Nyack's Little Schoolhouse, decided to renew her accreditation for her program using the new NAEYC system of accreditation, she already knew her program was good. When the accreditation materials arrived and the process was reviewed, the task seemed daunting and very time consuming. Having a strict deadline certainly was a motivating force to initiate the process, but it was clear that if she was able to achieve the new standards, this would lead to a higher level early childhood program in every respect.

The new reinvented NAEYC accreditation requires that you provide evidence of how you fulfill criteria. Each classroom is required to produce a portfolio that documents what the children are doing over a 12 month period. The center is asked to produce a Program Portfolio that demonstrates how criteria are fulfilled. Christa stated that this process was very useful. "Sometimes it is hard to be objective", Christa said, "but the new accreditation helped me understand in a systematic manner how I was fulfilling the criteria".

There were a number of changes that took place in the way curriculum is planned and implemented "We are more organized now, and the various aspects of the curriculum are consciously linked. For example, we complete individual child assessments and those assessments, along with input from parents, is used to plan curriculum and weekly lessons. The staff and director meet on a weekly basis to review the progress made towards implementation of the curriculum.

Another area of improvement that the accreditation process had an impact on was parent communication. Through the parent survey, they discovered that parents were not getting some of the information about the program. They decided to post the information about the curriculum on their website, so parents could read it at their leisure. The website also includes photos of the children engaged in social and learning activities as well as samples of their artwork and projects. As a result, the website became an additional and useful tool for providing a constant stream of communication between the parents and the school.



In addition, a greater connection was made with the community. In NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria, it states, "Program staff use their knowledge of the community and the families it serves as an integral part of the curriculum and the children's learning experiences" Through the year, the teachers at Nyack's Little Schoolhouse made connections with other members of the community. The children designed stamps and wrote postcards. When the female postal worker from the Nyack Post Office came to visit, she picked up the postcards and talked about her job. A pediatric dentist from Nyack Hospital came to visit to discuss tooth care. The librarian from the local library visits on a regular basis and brings books about the current theme in the classroom.

Though it was a tremendous effort to complete, Christa Sampath had a very positive experience with the process. "Working at a higher standard, makes your job more enjoyable." Christa has found that her improved communication with parents has stopped parents from asking, "When are they going to start learning?" A final note from Christa, "If you want to improve your program in a comprehensive manner and in a relatively short time, you could not find a better tool!"



## CCRR EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: Karen Ross

GET TO KNOW US BETTER...

*What do you do at CCRR?*

I am the Director of Administrative Services providing administrative support (with the Admin Department) to the entire agency. Another words, Jack of all Trades, Master of None.

*How long have you been with CCRR?*

I started here in October of 1997 after retiring from the United States Navy after 20 years.

*Tell us about your family...*

I have been married to Marc for 28 years and we have 3 boys, Daniel, Stephen and Matthew.

*Do you have a favorite hobby?*

For all that know me, Atlantic City is my favorite hobby.

*What did you want to be when you "grew up"?*

I actually wanted to be a children's speech therapist. When I was in high school I did a lot of volunteering at Letchworth Village and worked with children.

## INFANT TODDLER CORNER

THE GIFT OF UNDERSTANDING FOR TODDLERS

Since toddlers can't say many of the things that may be on their minds, this letter from the point of view of a toddler can help caregivers know that understanding the toddlers' need for play is not only essential to their development but also much appreciated by toddlers. To learn even more about toddlers, please use the resources in our library, register for relevant workshops and call Marcia Scheer at extension 458 if you have questions or concerns about infants and toddlers.

*A Letter From A Toddler*

Dear Caregiver,

You looked a little tired and discouraged when the parents were coming to pick all of us up today. Then, when that one dad said, "Did they learn anything today or did they just play?" I thought maybe you'd just about had it. I'm writing to cheer you up and tell you that I'm learning lots because you help us to play.

Tonight at supper my big sister said that she learned "the nines table" in school today. I'm not sure what the "nines table" is but everyone seemed pleased and excited that she'd learned it.

I learned a lot today. Unfortunately, I can't talk enough to describe what I learned about how the world works. I know that dumping out bins of toys, climbing, knocking over blocks and squashing bananas on my feeding tray doesn't sound as mysterious as "the nines table" but I'm sure grateful that you know how important it all was.



Thank goodness you know I have to play to learn.

For example, remember today how every time you'd kneel down and open up your arms, I'd run to you for a big hug. We were playing a game, of course, and we'd both laugh — but just the act of running was learning for me. Babies and toddlers learn through their big muscles, you know. When I ran into your arms it not only made me feel loved and happy, it gave me a chance to practice the movements of using my arms and legs together. I'm brand new at that. Running strengthened those muscles too. It was fun. I wanted to do it over and over.

I'm glad you had time to play so that I could learn. Thank You.

And I'm glad you noticed today how much fun I had tapping things with the xylophone hammer. Remember? I tapped the xylophone for a while, then the table, then the floor and lots of other objects. I discovered so many different sounds — metallic, strong, soft. Oh, by the way, sorry about Robby's head. It sure scared me when he cried so loud. Thanks for finding all those boxes and pans for me to tap. I am beginning to understand so much more about the world now because you realized I was learning "just playing."

I heard you say, "Tappers need things to tap!" You must believe that "Dumpers need things to dump," too, because you filled up that coffee can with clothespins over and over and let me dump out as much as I wanted to. You must have realized that I wasn't trying to make a mess when I dumped out all the tubs of toys yesterday. I need to dump things out. I'm so curious about how something can be full one minute and empty the next — and that I can make it happen. Dumping things out makes me feel big. After lots of play at dumping, I'll want to try filling. It's really the very first step towards being able to put things away neatly — when I'm older.

Thanks to your helping me play, I'm learning that it's good to be curious, it's good to explore and learn and understand. I get the feeling you think my play is pretty valuable. My play is all my own idea you know. You must think that my ideas are pretty valuable, too. Hey, that must mean you value me, too. I'm important and what I learn is important — even if it isn't "the nines table"

Please don't be discouraged. You helped me play today. You gave me gifts of learning and self-esteem that nobody can ever take away.

See you tomorrow!  
A Toddler in Child Care

*Thanks to Alic Honig and J. Ronald Lally, authors of Infant Caregiving for the "Tappers need things to tap" concept!*

## A PROJECT TO LIMIT SCREEN TIME

Did You Know?

- Children watch about 4 hours of TV everyday.
- American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no screen time for children under 2 and 1-2 hours or less a day for older children.
- TV watching for babies interferes with cognitive development, language development, and sleep patterns.
- Children learn aggressive behaviors and become desensitized to real world violence by watching too much TV.

The New York State Department of Health has identified a great need for parents and child care center personnel to understand the connection between young children watching a great deal of TV and other screen media and the potential for obesity and other problems. Child Care Resources of Rockland is involved in a media project with the state that addresses the need to educate the adults that care for young children and the gaps in providing information and education for them about limiting "screen" time for young children. In addition to the training we will provide the sites with alternative physical activities to use. The grant will service 35 centers in Rockland, Orange, Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess, Ulster, and Sullivan counties.

For more information contact Susan Torres-Bender at extension 419 or email [susanm@rocklandchildcare.org](mailto:susanm@rocklandchildcare.org).





## "NURSE'S NOTES"

**"If we don't teach our children healthy sexuality, someone will teach them unhealthy sexuality"**

Sexuality begins before birth. Research points to differences in brains and other systems even before birth, not only genitals. Parents often wish to know the baby's sex so they can "be ready" for a boy or a girl, bringing the baby into a world of expectations.

Healthy sexuality includes understanding one's gender as a positive aspect of being human, feeling worthy, being free from sexual abuse and having appropriate health care.

Adults are often upset when children display their natural curiosity. Children may feel conflicted about choosing dolls ("for girls"), "rough housing" ("for boys"), etc. because of the adult's communication of their beliefs and feelings.

You may be surprised to learn that the ability of a child to communicate effectively prevents child sexual abuse. Molesters and pedophiles choose children who are unlikely to report and lack understanding. Sexual abuse relies on secrecy and shame. Molesters are themselves deficient in three skills: communication (getting a message across), empathy (feeling for others) and accountability (taking responsibility for one's actions). By teaching and modeling these skills, we make children less vulnerable and raise them to be less likely to molest others. A great percentage of molesters are teens, barely out of childhood themselves. It is NOT the child's responsibility to, "SAY NO!", or to identify good touch from bad touch or affection from stimulation. It is our responsibility to teach healthy sexuality.

Children touch their bodies for learning and simply because it feels good. Self-touching only becomes a problem if it is for attention or becomes compulsive, or mimics sexual acts. We can teach that some behaviors are private, not bad.

We teach the correct names for eyes, nose, ears, etc. and the purpose of each- to see, to smell to hear, and so forth. Often real communication stops at the underpants. Silly names contribute to shame and secrecy, not privacy and purity. It is important to use the correct terms- vulva, vagina, penis, testes, anus, bowel movement, urine, etc. These words are not obscene, they are correct. Providers should discuss this with parents for mutual agreement and consistency.

Please share this article and choose workshops on this topic in CCRR's Training Calendar.

(Adapted from The Care for Kid's program, Prevent Child Abuse Vermont)

For Health Care Consultant Services, as required for Medication Administration licensure, contact Teresa Olander, RN at extension 493 or [teresao@rocklandchildcare.org](mailto:teresao@rocklandchildcare.org).

## HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING

### COMPETENCIES FOR BECOMING A FAMILY OR GROUP FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDER

This is a required, one time, fifteen (15) hour training course that must be successfully completed by prospective home-based providers; home-based providers who change from Group to Family or Family to Group; home-based providers who move; as well as those providers who replace an on-site Group provider. Home-based providers wishing to earn fifteen (15) hours are welcome to attend this training series if space permits.

\*Reminder: Any provider who moves or changes modalities (from Family to Group, or Group to Family) is required to attend this training. Contact June Pizzolo for more information at extension 418 or [junep@rocklandchildcare.org](mailto:junep@rocklandchildcare.org).



### HAVE A SCHOOL AGE CARE PROGRAM? THINK ABOUT JOINING ROCKLAND INSTITUTE FOR SCHOOL AGE CARE (RISAC)

Be part of an informal group that meets the second Tuesday of each month to discuss items such as regulatory issues, working with the school's transportation department, where to find staff and welcoming children and staff with special needs into your program.

Training certificates are given and best of all there is no fee thanks to funding from the Rockland County Youth Bureau. For more information contact Elaine Trotta at extension 421 or [elainet@rocklandchildcare.org](mailto:elainet@rocklandchildcare.org)

## HEALTH INSURANCE...DID YOU KNOW?

Child Care Resources of Rockland may be your source of last resort for health insurance!

In cooperation with a local union, we are able to offer you health insurance at group rates.

Our lowest cost current monthly premiums under these plans are:

HIP Prime HMO-A	
Single	\$466.96
Single+1	\$826.80
Family	\$1,142.96

These rates are valid until 1/31/09 and include the union dues as well as a 4% administration fee to CCRR.

You may access these plans by maintaining your membership with CCRR and keeping the monthly premium payments current by the first of each month.

Other options may also be available.

You may contact Kathleen at extension 662 or [kathleens@rocklandchildcare.org](mailto:kathleens@rocklandchildcare.org). You may also contact Gerd at extension 615 or [gerds@rocklandchildcare.org](mailto:gerds@rocklandchildcare.org).

## LET'S EAT!

"I believe it will be held a crime in the twentieth century to lure young bodies and minds to college (school) under the pretense of education, only to poison them slowly with bad food"

-Ellen Richards, founder of the home economics movement, c.1880

If we take a look at the obesity epidemic and the prevalence of chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease in the United States, this statement holds true today just as it did over 120 years ago. Science is beginning to understand the link between diet and disease. We have discovered ingredients in our food supply such as trans fat that cause heart disease; too many refined starches such as white flour, white sugar and high fructose corn syrup contribute to overweight and diabetes. Yet we feed these things to our children every day. The role of Eat Well Play Hard (EWPH) is to prevent Childhood /Adult Obesity by informing teachers, parents and children about the importance of exercise, and eating fruits, vegetables and low fat dairy. EWPH encourages centers to adopt healthy policies and behaviors regarding food and exercise.

For instance, centers provide meals, snacks and holiday celebrations filled with foods containing high amounts of saturated fat, sugars, artificial colors, artificial flavors and preservatives. Some of these additives have been linked to increased hyperactivity and decreased attention span in a wide range of children, not just those with a diagnosis of ADHD.<sup>1</sup> My 5 year old nephew who attends Universal Pre-kindergarten in an affluent Brooklyn neighborhood came home with a red mouth and tongue along with a stomach ache from eating too much candy given to him by his school to celebrate Easter. Previous holidays and birthday parties at his school were the same. Why is it necessary to provide children with junk food in school and do we feel that we are somehow depriving the children if we don't? We need to think about these questions.

As child care providers, we set examples for children, families and the communities we serve. We should carefully evaluate our actions and attitudes when it comes to food and the opportunities for physical activity we provide at our centers, programs and schools. If you have any questions or want more information about healthy eating and exercising call CCRR at extension 422 or Rockland County's Department of Health.

By Judyann Fiumano MS, RD - Nutritionist, Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Settings

1. Food colorings, preservatives, and hyperactivity. By: Eigenmann, Philippe A.; Haenggeli, Charles A.. Lancet, 11/3/2007, Vol. 370 Issue 9598, p1524-1525, 2p, 1c; (AN 27432654)



## UNIVERSAL PRE-KINDERGARTEN FOR 2008-2009

Child Care Resources of Rockland Inc. (CCRR) coordinated Universal Pre-kindergarten (UPK) for seven school districts in Rockland County this year, making UPK accessible to many more children during the 2007-08 school year through additional funding from the New York State Education Department (NYSED). Joining the existing districts of Clarkstown, Nyack, East Ramapo and North Rockland who were already providing UPK were: Nanuet, Pearl River, Ramapo Central and South Orangetown. This past year the available slots by district were as follows: Clarkstown 151, Nanuet 32, North Rockland 285, Nyack 85, Pearl River 38, Ramapo Central 69, East Ramapo 1479 and South Orangetown 53, thus serving over 2,100 children.

Program Specialists from CCRR worked with the teachers, providing technical support and assistance with the "Creative Curriculum" which was introduced to and incorporated into all 60 programs this year. This curriculum was selected and approved by the school districts because it is aligned with the New York State Early Learning Standards, which NYSED is now requiring.

In order to qualify for UPK for 2008-09 a child must be 4 years old by December 1, 2008, and must submit an application accompanied by: a birth certificate, immunization record, health appraisal form and proof of residency. Although our deadline for the lottery (in the event more children apply than there are slots available) was March 31, 2008, we will continue to accept applications throughout the year as sometimes openings do occur (not all slots may initially be filled) and we place children on waitlist if slots are not currently available.

UPK applications are available on our website, [www.childcarerockland.org](http://www.childcarerockland.org), on the individual school district's website, or may be requested by calling CCRR at 845-425-0009 x612.

For information about UPK in the North Rockland School District, please call 845-942-3007.

If you are an early childhood program interested in providing UPK services or want more information about UPK, please contact Vivian Reemer at extension 424 or [vivianr@rocklandchildcare.org](mailto:vivianr@rocklandchildcare.org).

# Newsletter Activities

May / June / July 2008

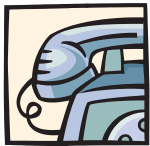


Included in this newsletter are a few activities and games to do with your children and the children in your care.

Enjoy!

## Upcoming Events!

For information about Child Care Resources of Rockland's upcoming events, log onto our **NEW website:**  
[www.childcarerockland.org](http://www.childcarerockland.org)



## Looking for Child Care?

For information about child care, child care subsidy, or special needs services, call (CCRR) 845-425-0009 x0 and ask to speak with a Child Care Counselor.

## Infant Activities

### Puppet Peekaboo

(125 Brain Games for Babies, by Jackie Silberg; Gryphon House Publishing)

Children love watching and playing with puppets. Put a puppet on your hand and hold it behind your back. Bring out the puppet and say, "Peek-a-boo, (child's name)". Now put it behind your back again. Continue doing this until your baby begins to anticipate the puppet coming out at a certain place. Then bring the puppet out at a different place: over your head, over the baby's head, etc. Always bring it down in front of your baby's face (not too close) when you say the peek-a-boo words. Give the puppet to your baby and see if she will imitate you.

### What brain research says:

With every game of peek-a-boo, thousands of connections among brain cells are formed or strengthened, adding a bit more development to the complex "wiring" that will remain largely in place for the rest of the child's life. These connections are more difficult to make later on.



### Muffin Tin Game (6-9 months)

(Games to Play with Babies 3rd Edition, by Jackie Silberg)

Place a toy into one of the cups of a small muffin tin. Show the baby how to take out the toy and put it back. Encourage the baby to take out the toy and put it back. Put another toy into a second cup and repeat the activity. Keep adding toys until you have filled all the muffin cups. Your baby will get endless enjoyment out of taking out the toys and putting them back.



### The Paper Game

(Games to Play with Babies 3rd Edition, by Jackie Silberg)

Collect various types of wrapping paper, aluminum foil, tissue paper, and so on. Crumple a piece of paper in your hand. Give the same kind of paper to the baby and help her crumple it in her hand. Select a different kind of paper and crinkle it in your hand. Give this kind of paper to the baby and let her crinkle it, too. Crumple the paper and drop it into a paper sack. Encourage the baby to copy you. The baby will enjoy not only the various crinkling sounds, but also dropping the crumpled-up paper into a sack.

# Toddler Activities

## Prints Charming

(<http://familyfun.go.com/>)

You need:

- Objects for printing (leaves, flowers and ferns are all good candidates)
- Washable tempera paint
- Foam trim rollers (you may find at the dollar store)
- Scrap paper
- Masking tape
- Styrofoam tray or paper plate
- White or colored paper



Lay an object on a piece of scrap paper. Add small rolls of tape underneath the object so it won't move when the child enthusiastically rolls on the paint. Squeeze some paint onto the tray or plate. Have the child roll the roller in it, and then paint over the leaf or flower. Pick up the object by its stem, lay it paint-side down on a sheet of white or colored paper, and cover it with another piece of scrap paper. Have each child gently rub over it with the flat of her hand. Carefully lift off the paper and then the object. Let the paint dry.

## Block Printing

(<http://familyfun.go.com/>)

You need:

- Small blocks of wood (small jewelry boxes will also work well)
- Paper
- Glue
- Rickrack
- Liquid tempera paint in a shallow pan



Glue rickrack to the end of a block of wood. Have the children press the block into the paint, then onto paper to make a zigzag design. Move the block around in different directions and add different colors of paint if you like. You can also wrap string around a block or glue an object such as a key or small plastic ring to the end of the block to make an interesting print.

## Mono Prints

(<http://familyfun.go.com/>)

In printing, mono means "one of a kind," which is a perfect description of this easy introduction to color mixing, texture, and spontaneity. The only rule here is to have plenty of paper on hand -- because printmaking can be habit-forming.

You will need:

- Washable, nontoxic tempera paint
- 2 large pieces of paper
- Plastic utensils
- A cookie sheet
- Cotton swabs

To start, ask the child to squeeze blobs of washable nontoxic tempera paint onto a cookie sheet. Lay a large piece of paper on top of the paint and have her smooth it down with the palms of her hands. Lift off the paper, then lay the print flat to dry. Next, encourage the child to make designs with her fingers, a cotton swab, or a plastic utensil in the smooth surface of the paint that remains on the cookie sheet. Lift off additional prints on clean sheets of paper. You can add more paint as desired.



# Preschool Activities

## July is National Picnic Month!

### Let's Have a Picnic

Why not gather items for a "Picnic" prop box to use indoors and out?

Consider including a blanket to sit on, a picnic basket, plastic plates, cups and utensils, play food, and books with a related theme. Introduce children to the song "The Teddy Bear's Picnic." Have a "picnic" snack by spreading out a blanket and eating outside.

### Ketchup and Mustard Bottle Painting

(<http://www.preschoolrainbow.org/summer-activities.htm>)

Fill plastic ketchup bottle with thick red tempera paint and mustard bottle with thick yellow tempera paint. Let children create their own designs or drawings on construction paper.



### A Picnic Song

Talk about all the different kinds of foods and things you can bring on a picnic. Then chant or sing this song, filling in the blanks with all the things you need on a picnic:

"Going on a picnic, leaving right away."

"If it doesn't rain, we'll stay all day."

"Did you bring the \_\_\_\_\_?"

"Yes, I brought the \_\_\_\_\_?"

Continue filling in the blanks with things you can bring on a picnic.

# School Age Activities

## Big Bubbles!

(<http://childparenting.about.com>)



Bubbles aren't just for babies! When the weather is warm it's a great time to make big bubbles!

You need:

- 1 wire coat hanger
- some scrap cloth like an old t-shirt or some thin cotton
- tape (duck tape works really well but most any waterproof tape will do)
- large shallow pan either round or square

Bend the coat hanger to fit into the pan. Wrap the coat hanger with the cloth. Tape it at the beginning and end with the tape. Pour bubble mixture in a shallow pan, large enough to fit the bubble wand. Dip the wand in, take it out and blow! How big can you make your bubble?

## Homemade Bubble Solution

- 1 Cup Water
- 2 Tablespoons Light Karo syrup or 2 Tablespoons Glycerin
- 4 Tablespoons Dishwashing liquid (Dawn Dish Detergent is recommended)

## Homemade Ice Cream in a Bag

(<http://familyfun.go.com/>)

You will need:

- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 cup half and half
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ cup Kosher salt
- Ice cubes (enough to fill each gallon size bag about half full)
- 1 pint size zip lock bag
- 1 gallon size zip lock bag



1. Combine the sugar, half and half, and vanilla extract in the pint-size bag and seal it tightly.
2. Place the salt and ice in the gallon-size bag, then place the sealed smaller bag inside as well. Seal the larger bag. Now shake the bags until the mixture hardens (about 5 minutes). Feel the small bag to determine when it's done.
3. Take the smaller bag out of the larger one, add mix-ins, and eat the ice cream right out of the bag. Easy cleanup too!

Serves 1