

Ready to Succeed

An Early Literacy and School Readiness Newsletter for Professionals

The Need for "Off to a Good Start"



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Volume 2, Issue 2

"Off to a Good Start" is a program that can help parents interact and guide their preschool children in ways that promote their development and social and intellectual readiness for kindergarten. Through this program, parents will learn and practice skills and activities that will get their children off to a good start!

The **Ready to Succeed** Program would like to

partner with child care providers in Placer County in delivering the **"Off to a Good Start" Workshop Series** to parents of four and five year olds. Since parents will soon begin the kindergarten registration process, we thought this an ideal time to inform you about this wonderful opportunity for the parents in our communities.

When children enter kindergarten they, and often their parents,

experience an important life transition. With this transition the child moves, probably for the first time, to a structured learning environment. The child's ability to handle this experience critically influences his or her sense of competence as a student. Success in kindergarten strongly predicts a child's future educational achievement.



Similarly, parents' attitudes toward school and their involvement during this beginning school experience influence the extent to which parents will, or will not, successfully promote their children's educational achievement. We have ample evidence that the nature of parents' interaction with schools and their involvement with their children's educational experiences vitally affect their children's



educational achievement. Children are more likely to succeed in school if parents work closely with their children's teachers and help their children learn at home.

Others who provide care and support for children are important partners in children's early literacy development. Research shows that quality early education and care programs are critically important for children's early development and subsequent performance in school. Children receiving quality care have enhanced cognitive and language development, engage in more complex activities, score higher on standardized measures for school readiness, and these positive effects last into adolescence and adulthood.

This period just before a child enters kindergarten, therefore,

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"Off to a Good Start" Workshop #1

Kindergarten Expectations

Parents participate in a Prop Box activity illustrating the value of play for children.

Art - Rain Sticks

This is a great way to introduce children to a way of simulating the sound of rain.

SUPPLIES:

paper towel tubes
14 1½" brads
2 cardboard circles to fit in ends of tube
masking tape
gift wrap or construction paper

Choose one of the following per tube:

dried beans or peas, small metal washers, plastic beads, elbow macaroni, **or** aquarium gravel

DIRECTIONS:

1. Insert brads at varying



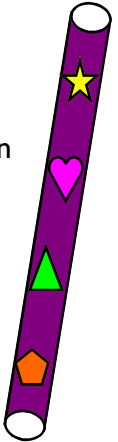
- distances apart all around the tube to form a random pattern.
2. Tape one cardboard circle onto one end of the tube.
 3. Pour 2-3 tablespoons of the materials you chose into the open end of the tube.
 4. Tape the other cardboard circle to the open end of the tube.
 5. Cover the tube with wrapping paper or construction paper to make the rain stick colorful.

To use, hold the rain stick perpendicular to the floor so that all the "rain" is in one end

of the tube. Flip the rain stick over and listen to the "rain." Is it raining hard or is it just sprinkling? What different sounds can be made by the way you move the rain stick?

EXTENDING THE PROJECT

Make several pairs of rain sticks using the same material in each pair set. Create a center for the children to listen to the rain sticks and match each pair. Each pair will have its own unique sound. Can they distinguish the difference?



Songs for a Rainy Day

RAIN, RAIN FALLING DOWN
Sung to: *Row, Row, Row Your Boat*
By: Susan A. Miller

Rain, rain falling down,
Falling on the ground.
Pitter, patter, pitter, patter,
What a lovely (squishy, noisy, silly, etc.) sound.

IT IS RAINING
Sung to: *Frere Jacques*
By: Susan Widdifield

It is raining, it is raining,
On my head, on my head.
Pitter, patter raindrops
Pitter, patter raindrops,
I'm all wet! I'm all wet!



UNDER THE RAINBOW
Sung to: *Up On the Housetop*
By: Jean Warren

First comes the rain cloud passing by
Dropping raindrops in my eye.
Then comes the sunshine up so high
Now a rainbow in the sky.
Ho, Ho, Ho, who wouldn't go.
Ho, Ho, Ho, who wouldn't go.
Under the rainbow, yes siree ~
Under the rainbow you and me!

Science - Magic Puddles?

Have the children ever noticed that the puddles left behind after a rain eventually disappear? Try this fun and easy way of recording the magic "shrinking" puddle:

In the morning, go outside and find a puddle that is on a flat surface of cement or black top. Trace the outer edge of the

puddle with chalk. Have the children make predictions about what is going to happen to the puddle.

Go back inside. After about one hour, return to the puddle and trace the new outer edge of the puddle. This will allow the children to "see" the science of evaporation in action.



Here is the scientific explanation:

When water puddles on cement or black top, the heat from the sun slowly causes the liquid water to change into *water vapor*, which is a gas. The water vapor then rises into the air. This process is called *evaporation*.

The Need for "Off to a Good Start" continued



is a time of special opportunity. It is a time when parents want and can use help and when this help can have a lasting impact on children's educational destiny.

A nationwide survey of kindergarten teachers reported that the teachers felt 35% of their students were not ready for kindergarten. Furthermore, 43% of those surveyed felt the situation was getting worse. When asked

to identify areas in which their students were deficient, overwhelmingly they reported "lack of proficiency in language." These same teachers also identified "parent education" as the single most important thing to improve school readiness.

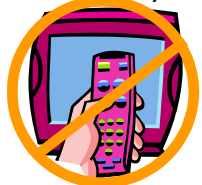
In summary, programs are needed to assist parents, institutions, and communities improve children's preparedness for kindergarten,

because "children who are not ready for kindergarten become the children who are not ready for first grade and the children who will not meet the academic standards later on.

If you are interested in partnering with the **Ready to Succeed** Program, please contact us at your convenience. We look forward to hearing from you.

Turn Off the TV - Tune Into Family Fun! Dates to Save

In celebration of TV Turn Off Week the **Ready to Succeed** and **Nutrition BEST** Programs will be conducting an exciting community event and provider training! Come and join us in all the fun, family-oriented activities



that are great, healthy alternatives to watching television.

Especially for you, the morning session is a

wonderful opportunity for you to bring your children for a field trip!

Tuesday, April 22
Turn Off the TV ~ Tune Into Family Fun!

Placer Co. Fairgrounds
Johnson Hall
800 All America City Blvd.
Roseville
10:00 am - 12:00 pm
and 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm

And, a few weeks prior to this event, we will be offering a training

for early childhood educators on fun ways to implement **Turn Off the TV ~ Tune Into Family Fun!** with your families.

Early Childhood Educator Training
Saturday, April 5th
9:00 am - 12:00 pm
Location to be determined.

All the details are currently being fine-tuned and more specific information about how you can be involved will be available in the coming weeks!

Books for the Season

St. Patrick's Day



St. Patrick's Day
Gail Gibbons
Hooray for St. Patrick's Day
Joan Holub
A Leprechaun's St. Patrick's Day
Sarah Kirwan Blazek
St. Patrick's Day Alphabet
Beverly Barras Vidrine
St. Patrick's Day in the Morning
Eve Bunting
St. Patrick's Day
Dorothy Rhodes Freeman

Easter

The Night Before Easter
Natasha Wing, et al
The Easter Bunny's Wish
Justine Korman
Corduroy's Easter
B.G. Hennessy, et al
Easter Basket
Michelle Knudsen
A Bunny's Tale
Ellen Patrick
The Easter Egg Farm
Mary Jane Auch



Spring



Spring
Ron Hirschi
The Boy Who Didn't Believe in Spring ~ Lucille Clifton
When Will It Be Spring?
Catherine Walters
The Search for Spring
Else Holmelund Minarik
Spring is Here
Taro Gomi
That's What Happens When It's Spring ~ Elaine W. Good

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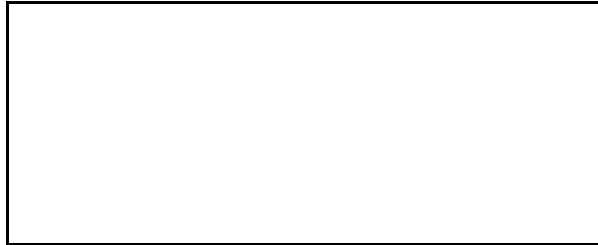
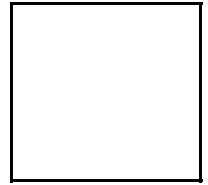
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Ready to Succeed is supported by
Children and Families
Commission of Placer County.



Serving Placer County
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Mark your calendars for these
upcoming events and workshops.
More details will be posted on our
website...

MARCH

Celebrate Dr. Seuss!
Friday, March 14th
10:00 am ~ 1:00 pm
Location to be determined.

"Let's Read Together" EC Educator
Workshop
New Units: *Goodnight Moon*, *Where's Spot*,
and *Read to Your Bunny* will be featured.

Saturday, March 29
8:30 am ~ 12:30 pm
UCCE Office ~ Auburn

APRIL

"TV Off the TV" Provider Training
Saturday, April 5th
9:00 am ~ 12:00 pm
Location to be determined.

MAY

"Off to a Good Start" EC Educator Training
Saturday, May 17th **and** May 31st
8:30 am ~ 12:30 pm
UCCE Office ~ Auburn



Sharon K. Junge
County Director



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