



Minnesota

Child Care Provider Information Network

We SUPPORT, PROMOTE and STRENGTHEN the family child care profession.

Summer 2018 / Volume 2, Number 2

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The State of Early Childhood

Editor's Note: If you have been in the profession of family child care for ten years or more, you may be able to relate to the concerns Rae Pica shares in MCCPIN's lead article this month. The following article is reprinted with permission.

"Early childhood educators tell me a lot of stories when I keynote or train. And since I've been speaking and training for almost four decades, you can imagine just how many stories there have been. Lately, though, I keep hearing the same three stories from teachers throughout the country.

Here's the first of what they're telling me:"

Three Things That Have Changed

1 More children are unable to cross the midline of the body.

Sadly, this isn't surprising, considering one pediatrician's contention that

infants are spending upward of 60 waking hours a week in things, like car seats, high chairs, and such. One of my colleagues calls this "containerized kids." Another refers to it as "bucket babies." Funny names for a not-so-funny situation.

In some ways the problem dates back to 1994, when the American Academy of Pediatrics created the Back to Sleep campaign to reduce the incidence of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Happily, the suggestion that babies be put on their backs to sleep had the desired effect. Unhappily,

people seemed to forget that the second part of the campaign slogan was "Tummy to Play."

As a result, fewer babies are spending time on their

tummies, meaning that, among other things, they're not developing the muscles necessary for crawling and creeping, cross-lateral movements that promote the ability to cross the body's midline.

Another factor is the busyness of daily life in our society. Parents are in a hurry, and manufacturers and marketers have presented such solutions as car seats that can be carried from the car to the home and used indoors while moms and dads get dinner and take care of the many other chores

awaiting them at the end of the day. Mostly gone are the days of the playpen, which may have seemed

to some to be "cage-like," but which at least offered the baby freedom of move-



Tummy time for babies is critical for developing the muscles necessary for cross-lateral movements.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

ment! She could roll over, slide on her belly, move on hands and knees, pull herself to standing, and bounce—without the aid of a confining bouncy chair. She could even practice walking while holding on.

As a result of today's sedentary behaviors, children are not only unable to cross the midline; also, they grow up lacking confidence in their movement skills. And children who feel "clumsy" or "klutzy" are children who won't take part in any physical activity, let alone the recommended minimum of 60 minutes daily. This has a grave impact on their physical and social/emotional health.

Additionally, Dr. Marjorie Corso conducted research in which she discovered that there's a correlation between body-space awareness and paper-space awareness. One example of this is that children unable to cross the midline of the body were sometimes reading and writing down the vertical center of the page. Sometimes they even wrote halfway across the page, turned the paper over, and started again!

The question now, of course is: what are we to do about all this?

The answer is simple,

really: we let children be children! They're born with a love of movement. If we give them the time, the space, and the opportunity to move, nature will take its course!

But we can also be a bit more intentional. We can encourage cross-lateral movement by inviting children to get on the floor and move like kitties, puppies, snakes, seals, and spiders, and by playing "mirror" games using movements that cross the body's midline.

Mostly, we can refuse to buy into the myth that the mind and body are separate! What impacts the body's development impacts the brain's development, and the sooner we acknowledge that, the better off our children will be.

2 Children don't know how to play anymore.

When I did my first professional development training in 1981, never in my wildest imaginings could I have foreseen teachers complaining that children don't

know how to *play*. Yet this is the second thing I'm hearing from educators on a regular basis.

This is especially shocking because pretty much every young animal on the planet *plays*. It's how they learn to be who they are! Kittens stalk each other in preparation for stalking birds and mice. Puppies and fox cubs engage in rough-and-tumble play to learn social skills. When ground squirrels play, they go on to be more coordinated and better mothers. Many animals, it seems, play simply because it feels good.

Play is an essential part of nature's plan. And if children are at a loss as to how to play, then something is seriously wrong.

Think back to your own childhood. I'm betting that a great many of your memories involved playing—much of it outdoors. I remember games of pretend (frontier



Children need to be given the time, space, and materials to encourage play.

woman comes first to mind) that engaged me for days on end. I couldn't wait to get outside to continue the saga. The dramatic play stimulated my imagina-

tion and has served me well in the years since.

I remember learning how to do cartwheels down the middle of the road. I didn't go on to become a gymnast, but mastering that particular skill after much, much hard work demonstrated what could be achieved with determination and persistence.

And I remember the friends I played with. Interacting, negotiating, and creating with them absolutely taught me how to be part of society.

So it's worrisome when teachers tell me that children only know how to imitate characters they've seen on screens, or that they go outside and simply stand around because they don't know what else to do.

Some of the reasons behind this aberration are painfully clear. Between digital devices and television, children have a multitude of images at their fingertips. They have no need to *imagine* because marketers and video producers have already done all the imagining for them. As a result, when asked to expand their minds and be inventive, children can't get beyond what they've previously seen. Thus, their dramatic play involves characters and scenarios already familiar to them.

And, of course, there's the *structure* of their lives. The days of today's children are scheduled beyond anything most of their predecessors experienced. Children in earlier times had downtime and faced boredom, learning how to use both to their benefit.

Beyond the lack of downtime, over-scheduled kids simply don't know how to make decisions for themselves, because they're used to being told what to do. It's no wonder, between school and organized sports and lessons, that when set free upon a playground, they're at a loss as to what comes next. It's simply not possible to switch from being adept at taking and following orders to being a self-starter.

So, what are early childhood professionals to do when they discover that the children in their care don't know how to play? The same thing they do with every other aspect of early childhood education: they facilitate learning.

Part of that facilitation comes in the form of offering children the space, time, and materials necessary to explore. If children aren't overscheduled in the classroom, and they have a variety of materials that stimulate the imagination,

dramatic or constructive play are the likely outcomes. When there are plastic hoops, a variety of balls, and plenty of loose parts outdoors, active play is more likely to occur. But, even then, they may need more from you.

When a child is "stuck," imitating a character or standing motionless on the playground, you can join the play, modeling the possibilities for taking the play further and asking questions that provoke new responses from the children—for example, "What do you think I should do with these twigs?" Once they're engaged, you can simply step away, avoiding the temptation to make the play adult-directed, and the possibility that the children will come to rely on you for what comes next.

Yes, it's incredibly sad that today's children are failing at something so basic—something that's a biological imperative. But if early childhood professionals understand the role of play in child development—as every early childhood professional should—we can ensure that this sad trend fails to continue!

3 The children have no fine motor control.

"The children can't grip a

crayon or paintbrush. The children can't use scissors. The children don't know how to hold a pencil."

On and on it goes—much of it coming from kindergarten and first-grade teachers. And the sad part is, this isn't a surprise at all.

There are two major reasons why. The first is that the little ones are far more likely to be holding a digital device these days than a crayon or pair of scissors.

Go to any restaurant where families dine—or to a doctor's office, or anywhere else parents and



Children need to be given lots of opportunities to develop both large and fine motor skills.

kids gather—and you won't see a child coloring while the family waits. They're not even talking to each other because they're all too busy engaging with their own cell phones or tablets. If they're using any muscles at all it's simply to swipe a screen.

Children who grow up swiping instead of coloring, cutting, and painting do not develop the fine motor skills they need to hold a pencil and write. To button and unbutton their clothes. To properly hold a utensil for eating. To use a stapler,

a bottle of glue, or a toothpaste tube.

The second reason this trend isn't surprising is that children are spending so little time crawling, running, jumping, and climbing these days. To those unfamiliar with motor skill development, that might seem like a strange connection. But the fact is that control over the body develops from the top to the bottom of the body, from the inside (trunk) to the outside (extremities),

and from the large muscles to the small muscles. That means that until the trunk and large

muscles are matured, the small ones in the hands won't fully develop. This is nature's plan. This is immutable. And this is why many experts have said that the best way to help children learn to write is by letting them climb trees or swing on monkey bars.

This pattern of development doesn't mean that children can't practice their fine motor skills until their large muscles are ready. On the contrary, young children should have plenty of opportunity to practice and

grow their fine motor skills; and they should have plenty of appropriate materials and objects with which to do it. According to occupational therapist Christy Isbell, in her book, *Mighty Fine Motor Fun*, these include “a wide variety of open-ended materials such as paper, drawing utensils, glue, clay, and small blocks.” Christy

also tells us that the children “should spend more time playing with manipulatives than practicing writing skills”—because if young children are pushed to write before their hands are physically ready, it may have a negative impact.

Naturally, while they’re doing all of this fine motor

practice, children should also have plenty of opportunity to crawl, run, jump, and climb!

If the children themselves were allowed to choose how to spend their time, they would be playing, as they were meant to do. And that play would involve and improve both large and small

muscles, as it simultaneously developed their brains, resilience, problem-solving skills, and all the other wonderful attributes they were meant to learn through play. Instead, adults—either because they don’t truly understand, or are in too much of a hurry—are ignoring the laws of child development. And, sadly, children are paying the price.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rae Pica has been an education consultant specializing in the education of the whole child since 1980. Check out her YouTube channel, *Active Learning with Rae*, and learn more about her keynotes, consulting, and books, including *What If Everybody Understood Child Development?* and *Active Learning Across the Curriculum*, at www.raepica.com.

Source: <http://www.communityplaythings.com/resources/articles/2018/the-state-of-early-childhood>

EXPERIENCE THE NATIONAL FAMILY CHILD CARE CONFERENCE JUNE 28 - July 1, 2018



28TH NATIONAL FAMILY CHILD CARE CONFERENCE

Celebrating the Power of FAMILY CHILD CARE

Hyatt Regency O'Hare . Chicago, IL . www.nafcc.org/conference



The Annual Meeting and Installation of the Board

April 21, 2018

10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

12:30 – 1:30 p.m. Social Gathering

Pizza Lunch Provided

Prior Lake Public Library

16210 Eagle Creek Avenue SE

Prior Lake, MN 55372

The following providers were elected by the membership to serve as the first Minnesota Child Care Provider Information Network Board of Directors (MCCPIN)

Congratulations to each of the elected providers.

Co-President:	Linda Schesso from Shakopee, MN	(2 Year Term)
Treasurer:	Deloris Friske from Prior Lake, MN	(2 Year Term)
Communications Chair:	Jennifer Rothmeyer from Northfield, MN	(1 Year Term)
Marketing Chair:	Brenda Novack from Waterville, MN	(1 Year Term)
Membership Chair:	Angelique Bruggeman from Savage, MN	(2 Year Term)
Public Policy Chair:	Cyndi Cunningham from St. Paul, MN	(2 Year Term)
Northeast Regional Representative:	Rita Craiglow from Grand Rapids, MN	(2 Year Term)
Northwest Regional Representative:	Jennifer Kalvoda from Moorhead, MN	(1 Year Term)
Northwest Alternate Regional Representative:	Marilyn Geller from Bemidji, MN	(1 Year Term)
Southeast Regional Representative:	Cheryl Gillard from Dodge Center, MN	(1 Year Term)
Southeast Alternate Regional Representative:	Theresa Peplinski from Rochester, MN	(1 Year Term)
East Metro Regional Representative:	Lisa Lindboe from Fridley, MN	(2 Year Term)

Note per current by-laws: The candidate with the higher number of votes will have the title of Regional Representative for a region and the candidate with the second highest number of votes will have the title of Alternate Regional Representative.

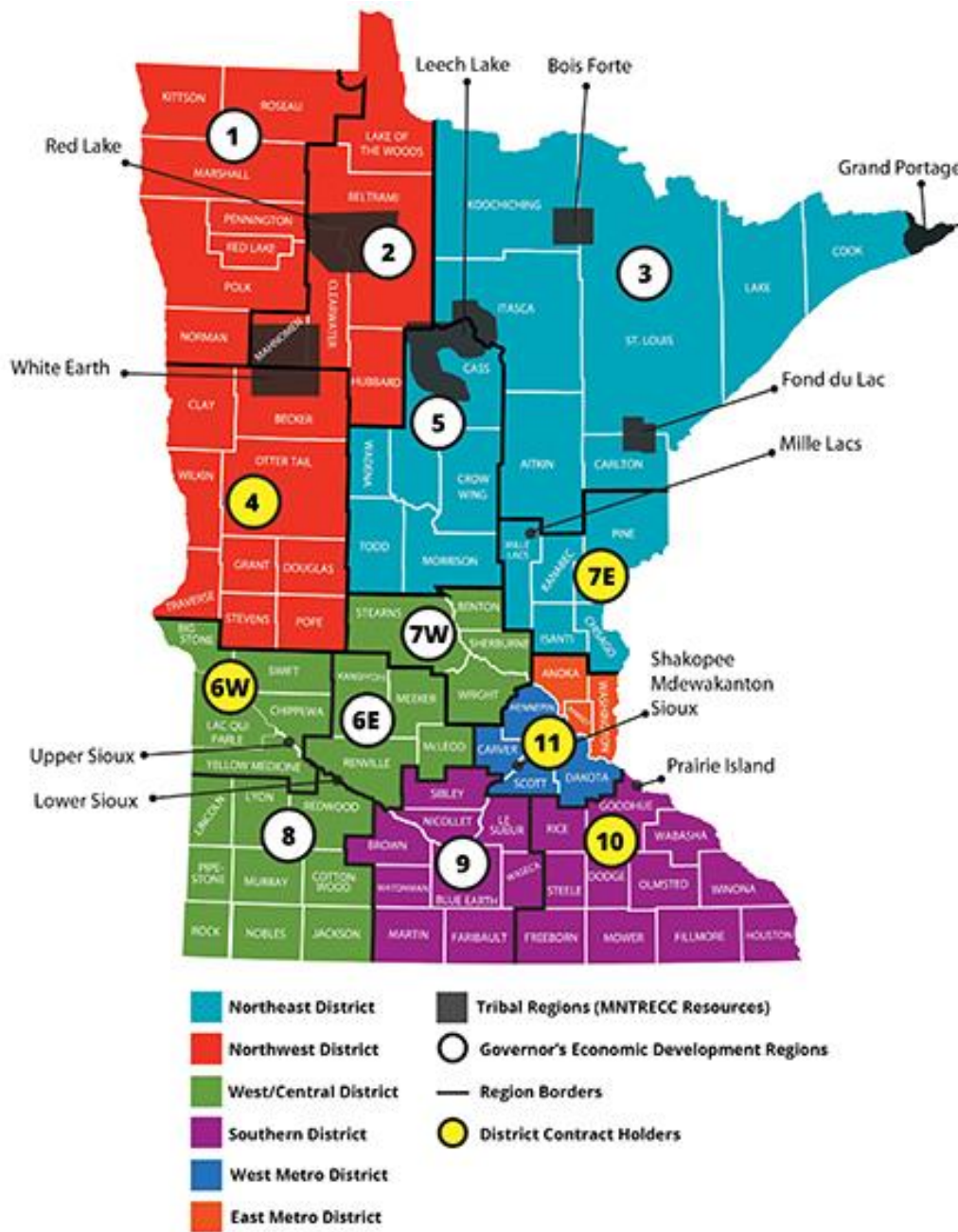
The following board positions were not filled at the election:

Co-President (1 Year Term)
Vice President (2 Year Term)
Secretary (1 Year Term)
Education Chair: (1 Year Term)
Southwest-Central Regional Representative (2 Year Term)
West Metro Regional Representative (1 Year Term)

**See
Regional Map
on page 6.**



Regional Map for MCCPIN



Northwest District: 1 (Kittson, Roseau, Marshall, Polk, Pennington, Red Lake, Norman) 2 (Lake of the Woods, Mahnommen, Red Lake Reservation, Clearwater, Beltrami, Hubbard) 4 (Becker, Clay, Douglas, Grant, Pope, Ottertail, Stevens, Traverse, Wilkin)

Northeast District: 3 (Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, St. Louis) 5 (Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd, Wadena) 7E (Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Pine)

Southern District: 9 (Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, LeSueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley, Waseca, Watonwan) 10 (Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha, Winona)

West/Central District: 6E (Kandioyhi, McLeod, Meeker, Renville) 6W (Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac Que Parle, Swift, Yellow Medicine) 7W (Benton, Sherburne, Stearns, Wright) 8 (Cottonwood, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Rock)

West Metro: Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Scott

East Metro: Anoka, Ramsey, Washington

September 2017

Minnesota Child Care Provider Information Network (MCCPIN)

Is on Facebook.

Like us on Facebook to receive the latest information from MCCPIN.

The MCCPIN Facebook group is designed to support all licensed child care providers in the State of Minnesota. Supporting providers to provide professional, quality child care is our forum. Keeping providers aware of breaking news in the profession and best practices is our goal. Join the Facebook group today and support the profession of family child care through your membership with the Minnesota Child Care Provider Information Network, the new State Association for family child care providers. Your membership is a business deduction and is important for professionalism!



NAFCC Affiliation

MCCPIN applied and has been granted Affiliate Status with the National Association for Family Child Care. MCCPIN reviewed the requirements to apply for affiliate status with Bill Hudson, CEO of NAFCC, and it was determined MCCPIN had met all the requirements.

Family Child Care Providers can be accredited by a program offered through NAFCC. Sheryl Warner is the contact person for NAFCC accreditation. Call 651-636-1989 and Linda will facilitate the support Sheryl has to offer those going through the accreditation process.



What to Say to Kids Instead of “Be Careful!”

Help Your Child Foster Awareness by Saying:

- ♦ **Notice how...** these rocks are slippery, that branch is strong...
- ♦ **Do you see...** the poison ivy, your friends nearby?
- ♦ **Try Moving...** your feet carefully, your quickly, strongly.
- ♦ **Try using your...** hands, feet, arms, legs.
- ♦ **Can you hear...** the rushing water, the singing birds, the wind?
- ♦ **Do you feel...** stable on that rock, the heat from the fire?
- ♦ **Are you feeling...** scared, excited, tired, safe?

Help Your Child Problem Solve by Saying:

- ♦ **What's you plan...** if you climb that boulder, cross that log?
- ♦ **What can you use...** to get across, for your adventure?
- ♦ **Where will you...** put that rock, climb that tree, dig that hole?
- ♦ **How will you...** get down, go up, get across?
- ♦ **Who will...** be with you, go with you, help you if?

Small Hands Crafting

White construction paper, forks, washable paints, and paint brushes are all you need to create tulip art!

Using the back of the fork, rock it back and forth in the paint to cover the tines.

Using the fork as a stamp and with the same motion, print these "tulips" onto white paper. Complete flowers by brushing on stems and petals.



Happy Spring

Did you know that National CACFP Week is held each year the first week of spring?

CACFP Week is a national education and information campaign sponsored annually by the National CACFP Sponsors Association. The campaign is designed to raise awareness of how the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program works to combat hunger and bring healthy foods to the table for adults in day care and children in child care homes, centers, and in afterschool and summer feeding programs across the country. When we all join forces and work together the message we provide is stronger and will receive more attention.

Learn more at cacfpweek.org!



Spring Sports Balloon Style: Movement on the First of Spring

Balloon Tennis

Create rackets by taping a stir stick to the back of paper plates. Using only the rackets, have your children try to keep the balloon from touching the ground. Teach tennis style scoring to the kids (who doesn't like to say 40-Love?) or use traditional scoring to keep it simple for younger children. This is also a great physical activity to play inside on a rainy day.

Balloon Soccer

Split the children into two teams. Create a soccer goal for each team by placing a laundry basket on its side. Using only their feet have kids try to get the balloon into the other team's goal.

Simple Spring Snacks

Fruit-a-licious Breakfast Cup

Low-fat yogurt
Whole-grain cereal
Fruit

Using a spoon, layer yogurt, cereal, and fruit in a cup to create a fun pattern.

Sassy Fruit Snake

Small bananas
Raisins

Peel bananas and cut in half lengthwise. Place two banana halves on small plate end to end, in an "s" shape. Add raisins to the top of banana as eyes.



CACFP is an indicator of quality child care.

www.cacfp.org

Your Brain on Social Media

Submitted By: Sue Knie - Weller, S.K. Income Tax & Accounting Inc.

How to Make Online Interaction Better for Your Health

About three billion people use social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat every day. The average user spends about two hours on these platforms, clicking, liking and replying to content sent from around the world. However, a growing body of research shows that too much or the wrong kind of social media use can have negative effects on mental health. This appears to be especially true for children and young adults. Here are some problems associated with misuse of social media and some ideas to deal with them.

The problems

Anxious and depressed. Several studies have shown that high social media use is correlated with anxiety and depression. It's not known why this is, but some theorize that it can inadvertently replace more positive activities that promote well-being or cause users to compare their lives negatively with others.



Sleep deprived. High social media use is correlated with sleep deprivation, which is a trigger for poor mental health.

Addicted. Many users report feelings of addiction to social media as well as psychological withdrawal symptoms when its use is restricted. High social media use can affect productivity and cause feelings of distracted attention for hours afterward.

Bullied. Users are less inhibited and more hostile toward others online, particularly when they can hide their identities behind pseudonyms. "Cyberbullying" is a real problem, particularly among school-age children, and victims can suffer from mental health issues.

Misinformed. The old saying that "a lie can travel halfway around the world before the truth can put on its shoes," is probably an understatement today. Studies have shown that those who get their news from social media are more likely to be misinformed. In just one example, several online communities have emerged in recent years promoting the idea that the earth is flat.

The solutions

Despite the potential negative effects, social media also has positive aspects. The right communities are a source of positive interaction, self-expression and emotional support. Here are some tips to a healthier use of social media.

Limit time. At least two separate studies have shown a correlation between more than two hours of daily social media use and negative mental health symptoms. Try limiting your family's use to less than two hours a day. Many in the tech community say no to their children using these social media platforms all together. Others require phones and electronic devices to be checked in when at home and restrict their use during the school week.

Set bedtime limits. Stop all social media use for at least an hour before bedtime, turn off your electronics, and place them outside of bedrooms to avoid disruptions. Neither brightly lit electronic screens nor upsetting online content right before bed tend to promote restful sleep.

Discourage mobile use. If you or your kids have a social media problem, delete the apps from your phones and only allow social media use from a home desktop computer. This will help you control the amount of use and avoid the distraction throughout the day.

No private social media. Ensure you have access to all social media accounts of your children and review them periodically.

Use real names. Having you and your kids use your real names and identities when using social media may seem risky, but experts at the youth social media advocacy group SmartSocial.com say it actually promotes positive use and avoids negative interactions and communities. It also helps teach kids to be responsible users who are conscious of the risks and consequences of online activity.

Find real communities. Use social media to join communities devoted to your favorite hobbies and interests. Talk to your kids about the communities they've joined and the interactions they have to make sure they are using social media for positive learning experiences and self-expression.

POSITIVE THINKING SOCIAL MEDIA



Why Become a Child Care Provider?

When asked what would you say to a person currently considering becoming a licensed family child care provider, what might you answer? Here is an idea shared by Brenda Novack from LeSueur County.

There is an extreme need for infant care. The ideal setting for children in child care is a family care setting. It is a place to learn life skills as well as social, emotional and interactive skills. These values can be transferred and used for the rest of the child's life. It is a place where relationships are built. Children build bonds with the provider that can last their whole life. We as providers make a huge impact on these kids, providing a safe, loving, and caring setting where children can play, learn, and grow. I also like to say that play is the best form of learning there is and children can experience this kind of learning in a family child care setting. Family child care can open the door to a child's future by introducing them to a subject that can spark an interest and will stay with them the rest of their life. Family child care is a partnership with the parents to help raise tomorrow's future.

MCCPIN BOARD MEETINGS

Board meetings are the *third* Saturday of the month.

Annual Meeting: April 21, 2018
10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Location: Prior Lake Public Library

You may attend in person or via conference call
by dialing: 1-218-339-7800 Access code: 3809643.

Future Meeting Dates:

June 16

Site to be determined.

August 18

Site to be determined.

September 15

Site to be determined.



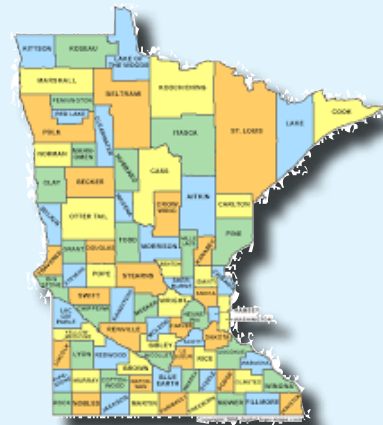
County Association Corner

Your Association's activities, such as conferences, can be noted in this section in the future. When your association is a member of MCCPIN, your web site and contact information will be posted on the web site under Networking: County Association.

Join Today and Be Listed Here:

County Associations / Neighborhood Groups

Carver County Licensed Childcare Association
Dakota County Family Child Care Association
Dodge County Family Child Care Association
Goodhue County Licensed Child Care Association
Pope County Family Child Care Association
Provider's Pride - Champlin, MN
Ramsey County Family Child Care Association
Scott County Licensed Family Child Care Association
Wright County Family Child Care Association



Check out our links to their web sites at:
www.mccpin.org/networking/CountyAssociations



Minnesota Child Care Provider Information Network

MCCPIN

Membership Application

Send to: MCCPIN Membership
PO Box 1136
Prior Lake, MN 55372

Member Information

- Individual Membership**
- ☐ **Provider** Initial License Year _____
- ☐ **Advocate**
- ☐ **County Association or Support Group**
- ☐ **Agency or Organization Advocate**
- ☐ **Renewal** ☐ **New Member**

First name (County Association, Agency, Organization Name) Last Name

Business Name

Address

City

State

Zipcode

County

()

Telephone

()

Cell Phone

Email address (will not be shared or sold)

- ☐ Check here to receive information, newsletters, updates by email.
- ☐ I would prefer information sent through the U.S. Postal Service

Accreditation/Education ☐ NAFCC Accreditation ☐ CDA ☐ MLFCCA Credential
☐ College Degree/Early Childhood Other _____ ☐ Not Applicable

Membership Options (Check or Cash Please do not send cash via mail)

MCCPIN ☐ \$48.00 1 year ☐ \$90.00 2 years

MCCPIN & NAFCC ☐ \$88.00 1 year

Note: NAFCC membership is discounted from \$45.00 to \$40.00 per year

On-Line payment: www.mccpin.org (Membership)

For Office Use:

Total _____

Check # _____

Received _____

Initials _____

Date Added _____

Payment Method: Credit ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard

_____-_____-_____-_____/_____/_____
Credit Card Number **CSC Code** **Expiration Date**

Check Enclosed _____ (Check Number)

Cash _____ (Amount) _____

Receipt requested ☐ No ☐ Yes



LegalShield:

From the trivial to the traumatic, and everything in between.

Ever have that question "what am I supposed to do?" regarding your child care business (immunization exclusions, Rule 2 interpretation, etc.), your home or personal life (will, taxes, insurance, car accidents, etc.)? You can obtain advice from friends, family members and other providers but rarely do they have true legal knowledge. LegalShield is a pre-paid program which gives you access to legal advice and representation at an affordable (\$19.95/mo. family + \$9.95/mo. business) rate. Have a lawyer at your finger tips! As a MCCPIN member you have access to this plan with a slight discount.

Contact Cyndi Cunningham:

cyndisday@comcast.net or
651-470-4857 for more information and to sign up!



Payments from Parents Using venmo*

<https://venmo.com/>

This program might be considered an electronic wallet. Through venmo (all lower case) parents can pay their provider using money they have in Venmo, or a link to their bank account or debit card. Both provider and parent have to agree to exchange funds from the client's bank to the provider's bank through a third party, PayPal. There is NO cost to do this and transfer takes place in about two days. To learn more about what is free and what has fees go to <https://venmo.com/about/fees/>

Having funds in your bank in advance of the week of care, or payment the first day of care in a week, is always a best business practice. This might be worth exploring as a less expensive option in KidKare.

*Tip from Videhi Larson, a participant in the PCI class offered this spring. Thank you, Videhi.



Business Cards

Business cards can be ordered from Vista Print on-line for a reasonable cost and shipping. 250 cards are \$8.99 with economy shipping of \$4.99 for a total of about \$13.98 or about six (6) cents a card. Business cards are great to carry with you all the time to promote family child care and your business.



http://www.vistaprint.com/category/business-cards.aspx?txi=15626&xnid=TopNav_Business+Cards&xnav=TopNav

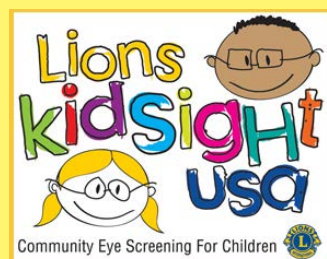


Lions Clubs International

KidSight USA

KidSight USA, a program sponsored and provided by Lions Clubs, is an eye screening service. Lion Club members are trained to run the machine that does the screening. A key purpose of the program is to catch eye issues early on as so much learning in the early years takes place with a child's sight. The program has proven to be very reliable in helping parents seek the next step for their children. Check out this resource on the MCCPIN web site and see if your local Lions Club can schedule the screening for providers and parents in your community.

<http://lionskidsightusa.org/>



Staying Organized

Before and After Tax Season

Submitted By: Sue Knie - Weller, S.K. Income Tax & Accounting Inc.

Organizing your tax records not only makes filing your tax return easier, it also helps you find the financial documents you need throughout the year. Whether you've already filed your tax return or are about to, here are some tips to get organized.

GO WITH THE FLOW (OF YOUR TAX RETURN)

Try organizing your records in the same order as they are required to fill out your 1040 individual tax return. Here are common categories and items to be collected in each:

Income. Copies of W-2s, 1099s, Social Security statements, interest income and investment income.

Charitable donations. Charitable donation receipts, separated by cash and noncash contributions. Include a copy of your charitable activity mileage log, if you have one.

Medical and dental. All documents related to medical expenses. You may also include a note calculating your medical deduction threshold (which is 7.5 percent of your adjusted gross income during 2017 and 2018).

Other itemized deductions. All proof of other itemized deductions, including state and local tax statements, mortgage interest, casualty and theft losses, unreimbursed business expenses and other miscellaneous itemized deductions. Note that miscellaneous itemized deductions are eliminated after the 2017 tax year, but keep all records for this tax season on file.

Business and hobby activity. Keep separate records for each hobby and business activity. Include records of related investments, expenses and mileage logs.

Education. Records of all education expenses for tuition, fees and materials (such as books or music instruments).

Investments. Records of investments in tax-advantaged retirement accounts, as well as contributions to investable accounts such as health savings accounts (HSAs) and 529 education savings plans. Also include records of capital gains and losses, particularly for tax-loss harvesting purposes.

Odds and ends. Put all the miscellaneous receipts that don't fit anywhere else into this file. Depending on your situation, you may be able to get tax breaks for a variety of expenses.

BONUS TIPS

How long should you keep your records? For tax filings, the IRS requires you to keep your records on hand for at least three years after you file. Some states require you to keep records longer than that and the federal government can ask you to keep records for six years if you understate your income.

Keep track by going digital. If keeping track of your tax records year after year sounds like a chore, at least things are easier in the digital age. You can scan your paper records and keep them digitally, but remember to keep your records backed up and secure from identity theft.

Make a checklist. If you're still waiting for some tax forms to arrive, go back to last year's return and make a checklist of all the forms you received. Add items for any new accounts or vendors you added since then and check off the forms as they arrive.



Small Hands Crafting

Kids will love painting with water spray bottles. Mix different colors of washable tempera paint with water in separate water bottles. Lay out different canvases or large pieces of poster board outside. In clothes that can get dirty, let the kids be creative and make a work of art.



Happy Summer

Did you know that your CACFP child care provider helps ensure the body systems work correctly with encouraging proper hydration?

As a CACFP provider, your child care home knows the importance of water and fluids to maintain a healthy body. Did you know the human body is 75% water? Water hydrates the body, cushions muscles and joints, and is used by the body to transport nutrients to and carry water away from cells and assist in regulating body temperature. We must rehydrate regularly to keep our muscles and body systems working properly. The daily recommended amount of water for a 4-8 year old is seven cups!

As the summer sun heats up, make sure to drink plenty of water. Stay hydrated!

Water Fun: Movement in the Summer

Summer is the best time to step outside and play in the water. Try these water games with your kids for some cool fun!

Drip, Drip, Splash - This is a simple variation on the old classic Duck, Duck, Goose. On the drip, the person that is it will drip just a tiny bit from a wet sponge on the other players. When it is time to splash, it will be a big soaking from the sponge.

Sponge Bullseye - With sidewalk chalk, draw various circles and assign point values, letters or numbers. Ask the children to get as many points as possible, hit a certain letter or a certain number with their wet sponges.

Car Wash - Those bicycles and toy cars need a good washing. Get out sponges and buckets and let the kids wash away all the dirt.

Summer Salsa

- 16-oz. strawberries, diced
- 2 kiwi, peeled and diced
- 1/2 cup blueberries
- 1/2 cup raspberries
- 3 tablespoons sugar-free apricot preserves or jam

Mix all of the diced ingredients and the whole berries with the sugar free jam. Chill. Serve the salsa with whole grain pitas or make your own whole grain cinnamon chips. To make cinnamon chips use whole grain tortillas. Spray tortillas with cooking spray and cut with pizza cutter into triangle pieces. Sprinkle all the pieces with a little sugar and cinnamon and bake at 350 for 8-10 min. Cool and dip into your delicious summer salsa!



Top Tips for All Ages and Stages

Using child restraints can be challenging sometimes. Here are some important tips and reminders:

Rear Facing (Birth to 3 years old)

- ✓ Chest clip at arm pit level
- ✓ Avoid bulky clothing
- ✓ Snug harness (pinch test) at or below shoulder level
- ✓ Snug seat belt- less than an inch of movement at belt path
- ✓ Proper recline angle to keep infants head is back and airway open
- ✓ Don't add ANYTHING to the car seat that is not approved by car seat manufacturer. (Shoulder pads, toys, infant inserts etc.)
- ✓ Rear facing until **ATLEAST** 2 years old



Forward Facing (2 to 7 years old)

- ✓ Retainer clip at arm pit level
- ✓ Avoid bulky clothing
- ✓ Snug harness (pinch test) at or above shoulders
- ✓ Snug seat belt- less than an inch of movement at belt path
- ✓ Tips of ears below seat back
- ✓ Harness to highest harness slot and weight limit of seat.



Booster Seat (4 to 12 years old)

- ✓ Shoulder belt snug and positioned across chest
- ✓ Head restraint adjusted properly
- ✓ Lap belt under armrest on booster seat
- ✓ Snug seat belt
- ✓ Child sitting upright, not slouching



Seat Belt (12+)

- ✓ Sitting all the way against seat back
- ✓ Lap belt on thighs
- ✓ Shoulder belt across collar bone
- ✓ Knees bent over edge of seat
- ✓ Feet on the floor to prevent slouching
- ✓ Head restraint available and adjusted properly



IMPORTANT: This tip sheet is **NOT** meant to replace the car seat and vehicle owners manual, but to provide you with tips to remember when you are transporting children in your vehicle!

Child Passenger Safety Resource Center

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MISSION STATEMENT:

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