“Play is under pressure right now, as parents and policymakers try to make preschools more like schools. But pretend play is not only important for kids; it’s a crucial part of what makes all humans so smart,” writes leading researcher Alison Gopnik, in an article on the Smithsonian website.

“We found children who were better at pretending could reason better about counterfactuals—they were better at thinking about different possibilities. And thinking about possibilities plays a crucial role in the latest understanding about how children learn. The idea is that children at play are like pint-sized scientists testing theories. They imagine ways the world could work and predict the pattern of data that would follow if their theories were true, and then compare that pattern with the pattern they actually see. Even toddlers turn out to be smarter than we would have thought if we ask them the right questions in the right way.”

Nancy Carlsson-Paige, in an article included in the Exchange Essentials collection, Advocating for Play, also makes the case that children’s play is currently under pressure: “Children today are playing less at home, outdoors, and at school. According to a national Kaiser Family Foundation survey, children in the two- to seven-year-old age group now average about three hours per day in front of screens—time they don’t spend in active, child-centered play.”

And in his popular new book, Oh Boy, Francis Wardle describes an important aspect of play that must be honored: how choice can change the way an activity feels to children. “It seems that children have a deep belief that play must be self-chosen. In fact, the research of [Nancy] King discovered that kindergartners considered the same activities to be play if they were self-chosen, and work if they were assigned by the teacher. Many of us have watched a preschooler happily wash dishes in the kitchen sink, only to protest when asked to wash the dishes!”

From ExchangeEveryDay
FREE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Did you know we can provide one-on-one Technical Assistance in your Family Child Care Home or Center Classroom?

Topics include, but are not limited to:

- Behavior and Guidance
- Communication with Families
- Creating Policies/Handbooks
- Creating Lesson Plans
- Customer Service
- Nutrition
- Outdoor Learning
- Physical Activity
- STARS Information
- Story Time Strategies
- Transition Ideas...and much more.

We are here to help!

If you are interested in these services, please contact Amber or Andria in Tahlequah at 918-453-5300 or Lisa in Pryor at 918-824-4533.
Tiffany Downing operates a large family child care home in Grove and has been in business for five years. She recently earned 2-star status through the Reaching for the Stars program. Tiffany worked closely with Lisa Evans, who provided technical assistance throughout the process. Congratulations, Tiffany!

Heather Dysart operates a large family child care home in Grove and has been in business since May of 2018. She recently earned 2-star status through the Reaching for the Stars program. Heather also worked closely with Lisa Evans throughout the process. Congratulations, Heather!
January & February Trainings

You must register to attend any of these trainings. Visit www.okregistry.org, type in the name of the training, choose the correct location, and then click on Register. If you have pre-registered you will be called if the class is canceled due to weather, lack of participation or unforeseen circumstances. You will receive 2-formal training hours for each training. If you are in need of additional training please visit CECPD’s website https://www.okregistry.org/

January 6, 2020

Supervision in an Child Care Classroom
(Adair County)
Indian Capital Technology Center
3320 US-59
Stilwell, OK 74960
6:30 p.m.— 8:30 p.m.
Trainer: Margaret Tyner

Child safety is the most important aspect of child care. Children must be provided a safe and age-appropriate environment in which to play and learn. Child care providers should understand general requirements for keeping children safe in the child care facility. This lesson discusses general safety guidelines and procedures, common safety hazards, and best practices for diminishing or preventing such hazards.

January 23, 2020

Professionalism in Child Care
(Cherokee County)
Cherokee Nation CCRC
16957 W. Cherokee
Tahlequah, OK 74464
6:30 p.m.— 8:30 p.m.
Trainer: Andria Hummingbird

The absence of professionalism is usually more obvious than its presence. Who will notice whether you have this quality or not? Your boss definitely will along with your co-workers and the parents of the children in your care. It can also affect your ability to keep your job and advance in your career.

So, what can you do to make sure you exhibit professionalism? What can you do to ensure that you don’t show a lack of it? This training will share the do’s and don’t of professionalism in child care.

February 4, 2020

Infection Control for a Child Care Setting
(Ottawa County)
Ottawa County Courthouse Annex
Community Room
123 E. Central
Miami, OK 74354
6:30 p.m.— 8:30 p.m.
Trainer: Margaret Tyner

Infection Control is an important part of an early child care program. Learning ways to keep children and staff healthy during cold and flu season will save your child care center time and money. Participants will review proper hand washing techniques and learn to recognize good hygiene practices.

February 20, 2020

Understanding Our Culturally Diverse Classroom
(McIntosh County)
Creek Nation Indian Health Center
500 Eunice Burns Rd.
Eufaula, OK 74432
6:30 p.m.— 8:30 p.m.
Trainer: Phyllis Yargee

Unlike the goals of cultural appreciation and cultural enrichment, the goal of cultural empowerment is not to teach culture to children but to teach children in a culturally consistent context. Caregivers must become aware that they will probably never learn a cultural curriculum that they will teach; instead, they will learn ways to relate to issues of culture. It will take work and study to understand the subtleties of how culture influences and empowers people. Such an endeavor is especially important for those caregivers responsible for the care of children who come from cultures that are different from their own.

*Please register for classes a week in advance. Classes will be canceled based on lack of participants*
February Trainings cont. & March Trainings

You must register to attend any of these trainings. Visit www.okregistry.org, type in the name of the training, choose the correct location, and then click on Register. If you have pre-registered you will be called if the class is canceled due to weather, lack of participation or unforeseen circumstances. You will receive 2-formal training hours for each training. If you are in need of additional training please visit CECPD’s website https://www.okregistry.org/

February 24, 2020

Understanding Our Culturally Diverse Classroom
(Okmulgee County)
Green Country Technology Center
1100 N. Loop 56
Okmulgee, OK 74447
6:30 p.m.— 8:30 p.m.
Trainer: Phyllis Yargee

Unlike the goals of cultural appreciation and cultural enrichment, the goal of cultural empowerment is not to teach culture to children but to teach children in a culturally consistent context. Caregivers must become aware that they will probably never learn a cultural curriculum that they will teach; instead, they will learn ways to relate to issues of culture. It will take work and study to understand the subtleties of how culture influences and empowers people. Such an endeavor is especially important for those caregivers responsible for the care of children who come from cultures that are different from their own.

March 5, 2020

Infection Control for a Child Care Setting
(Mayes County)
Cherokee Nation
219 NE 1
Pryor, OK 74361
6:30 p.m.— 8:30 p.m.
Trainer: Margaret Tyner

Infection Control is an important part of an early child care program. Learning ways to keep children and staff healthy during cold and flu season will save your child care center time and money. Participants will review proper hand washing techniques and learn to recognize good hygiene practices.

March 9, 2020

Infection Control for a Child Care Setting
(Muskogee County)
Muskogee Public Library
801 W. Okmulgee St.
Muskogee, OK 74401
6:30 p.m.— 8:30 p.m.
Trainer: Margaret Tyner

Infection Control is an important part of an early child care program. Learning ways to keep children and staff healthy during cold and flu season will save your child care center time and money. Participants will review proper hand washing techniques and learn to recognize good hygiene practices.

March 24, 2020

IMIL
(I am Moving, I am Learning)
MVP Every Day
(Delaware County)
Grove Community Center
104 W. 3rd St.
Grove, OK 74344
6:30 p.m.— 8:30 p.m.
Trainer: Letisha Locust

This is the MVP workshop which focuses on the IMIL goal of increasing the QUANTITY or amount of physical activity throughout the day. This workshop will have us up and moving the majority of the time as we participate in songs, scarf, and rope activities to integrate MVP.

If you are interested in enrolling in the CDA-Pathway to Professional Growth Classes, please call Gina McPherson at 866-343-3883. For information about online classes go to www.okhighered.org/secc.
WINTER FAMILY PLAY PLAN
Turn off the Screen & Turn on the SOCKS

Everyday objects like socks can offer endless opportunities for family playtime.

Every household has several pairs of socks. These can be used to create ideas for family playtime. As families play together, children learn skills like cooperation, turn taking, and problem-solving. And, of course, it’s just plain fun to everyone.

Watch children as they play. This can help you figure out what they are working on and can help you know what to say and do.

You can add to the play by talking about what is happening: “I see that you have matched the socks by their colors.” “That gray sock belongs to you and this one belongs to me—how can we tell if they are both the same color?” “We made a mouth for your sock puppet. What else should we put on it?” “Can you guess how many socks will it take to make a jump rope big enough for you?”

IDEAS FOR WINTERTIME FAMILY PLAY WITH SOCKS

GAMES WITH SOCKS

- **Sock Beanbags.** Fill a sock with uncooked beans or rice. Tie a knot at the top. Throw the bean bags at targets you make.
- **Sock Volleyball.** Make a net, using socks tied together. Make a shuttlecock with a ball in a sock with a sock tail. Hit the ball with the palm of your hand. Younger kids can catch and throw the shuttlecock.
- **Match the Socks Game.** Put several (10-20) pairs of socks, mixed up in a pile. See who has the most pairs of matched socks. Younger kids get more time, depending on their age.
- **Sock Touch.** Fill several socks with everyday items, such as a toothbrush, pencil, coin, comb, button, crayon toy car, etc. Players name the item by feeling it from the outside. Younger children can put their hands into the sock to touch.
- **Jump Rope.** Make a jump rope by tying several socks together.

Article from Truce Teachers, www.TruceTeachers.org
WINTER FAMILY PLAY PLAN  
Turn off the Screen & Turn on the SOCKS continued…

GAMES WITH SOCKS

Sock Art
- **Sock Puppets** are an all-time favorite! Create simple ones, poking in for the mouth and adding eyes with markers or gluing on googly eyes. Or make more elaborate sock puppets, using felt pieces, yarn, fabric scraps, ribbons, or whatever else you have handy.
- **Creations with Socks.** Color with chalk on white paper and then use socks to smear the chalk, creating an interesting piece of art.
- **Sock Erasures.** Use socks as an erasure on chalk board or white board surfaces.

MATH FUN WITH SOCKS

**Sorting Laundry.** Yes, asking your child to help you sort the laundry is an early math game! Toddlers can help sort laundry by color or type of clothes (socks in one pile, underwear in another). Older child can sort by color, garment type, and owner (Mom’s pile, Dad’s pile, brother’s pile, etc.).

GET PHYSICAL WITH SOCKS

- **Sock Hop.** Turn on some music, take off your shoes, and dance together in your socks!
- **Sock Skating.** Find a **smooth** surface (preferably not a wooden floor) and skate away.

TRUCE FAMILY PLAY TIP

Develop a family screen turn off ritual. Here are some ideas:
- Count all the screens that are on as you turn them off.
- See if you can turn off all the screens in a minute or less.
- Have a bin or basket where you put all portable screens during family play time.

WHAT DO THE EXPERTS SAY?

The seemingly simple process of sorting by color and shape is the foundation for living in a mathematical world. Sorting by color and shape prepares your child for the future application of these skills in making graphs or searching for a book at the library. It’s a perfect example of how children (and adults) use color as a means for defining and organizing the world. –Ellen Booth Church, Scholastic

*Article from Truce Teachers, www.TruceTeachers.org*
EARLY CHILDHOOD INFORMATION

CHEROKEE NATION CHILD CARE RESOURCE CENTER
1-888-458-6230

OKLAHOMA CHILD CARE RESOURCE & REFERRAL (OCCRRA)
1-888-962-2772  www.oklahomachildcare.org

CHILD CARE AWARE OF AMERICA
1-800-424-2246  www.childcareaware.org

OKDHS Office of Background Investigations
1-800-347-2276  OR  405-521-2355

REACHING FOR THE STARS
Misti Denton  1-800-225-9868  Eastern Oklahoma
Tiffany McPherson  1-800-884-1582  Western Oklahoma

CENTER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CECPD)
1-888-446-7608  www.cecpd.org

SCHOLARS FOR EXCELLENCE IN CHILD CARE (S.E.C.C.)
Verna Corley  918-647-1252  Carl Albert State College, Sallisaw
Gina McPherson  1-866-343-3881  Career Technology Centers

WARMLINE: 1-888-574-5437

CHILD CARE SERVICES/Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator
Vikki Dobbins  580-673-5952