



Caring For Your Kids

SAVE THESE DATES...

Better Kid Care Series rescheduled!

You're invited to attend one or all classes for just \$12.00 per person. Cost includes all sessions, program materials & refreshments. Pre-registration is required – by January 13. Call 591-4838 for more information.

WHEN:

January 20, 2009 ~ Problem Solving with Children

January 27, 2009 ~ Math for Every Age

February 3, 2009 ~ Science for Young Thinkers

February 10, 2009 ~ Improving Transition Times

Classes held Tuesday evenings 6:30 – 8:30PM at the VCE Newport News Extension Office 739 Thimble Shoals Blvd., Suite 1009, Newport News.

Small Steps to Health and Wealth™ (SSHW) encourages participants to make positive behavior changes to simultane-

ously improve their health and personal finances. Optional workbook costs \$18.00 and can be purchased at first class.

WHEN:

Wednesdays, January 28, February 4 & 11, 2009

6:30 – 8:00 PM

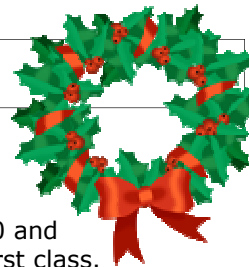
Registration required, please call 591-4838 no later than January 16, 2009.

Become a Peninsula Saver – Come one come all and learn how you can build wealth! Become a member of *Peninsula Saves* and learn how to pay off debts and find ways to reach your financial goals. We can help, with tips and tools to help you set goals, develop strategies to reach those goals, and start saving.

WHEN:

Wednesday, February 25, 2009 **or** Wednesday, March 25, 2009

6:30 – 8:00 PM Registration required, please call 591-4838 no later than February 13, 2009.



VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY
EMPLOYER
AND STATE UNIVERSITY (0512)
BLACKSBURG, VIRGINIA 24061

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Volume 4, Issue 2
December 2008
Published quarterly

Mark your calendar...

Inauguration Day
January 20

Healthy Weight Week
January 18-24

Give Kids A Smile Day
February 1

Chocolate Mint Day
February 19

Peninsula Saves Week
February 22–March 1

Inside this issue:

Save the Dates	1
Caring Conference	1
Handwashing Awareness Week	2
Safety First	2
Peninsula Saver	2
Responsive Discipline	3
Recession Proofing	3
Children's Toys	4

Caring For Our Children – Spring Conference

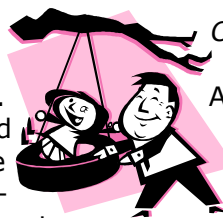
WHEN: Saturday, March 28, 2009

WHERE: Williamsburg

8:00am – 1:00 pm
Cost: Registration Fee: \$15.00 PP if paid by March 16, 2009

Special Guest Presenter: Karen DeBord, Professor & Extension Specialist, Child Development, North Carolina Coop-

erative Extension at NC State. Dr. DeBord is lead author of the *Preschool Outdoor Environment Measurement Scale (POEMS)*, she and others in the state are working to raise the quality of outdoor children's environments.



Other workshops include Outdoor First Aid; Music Outdoors; Water Play; Outdoor Art; Rainy Day Activities; & Backyard Science.

We'll also have exhibitors to enhance your educational experience!

"Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Mark McCann, Interim Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; Alma C. Hobbs, Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State, Petersburg."

National Handwashing Awareness Week ~ Dec 7th—13th

You can be hands on with handwashing!!

Henry the Hand Champion Handwasher is sponsoring National Handwashing Awareness Week and wants you to be part of this awesome world wide campaign... Just for the Health of it!



state be the Champion Handwasher!

Participate in our jingle/rap/song competition.

Start an email chain with your friends,

family and co-workers.

Ask the mayor of your town to declare a Handwashing Proclamation!

Do not forget your school principal, school nurse and county

health department.

Link clean hands with 10 of your friends on Wednesday, Dec. 10, 2008 at 8:00 pm for a Global Hand Awareness event by <http://www.henrythehand.com>.

Spread the word not the germs!

If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in this activity, please contact Helen Harris, VCE-Newport News at 591-4838/TDD*) during business hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. to discuss accommodations 10 days prior to the event.*TDD number is (800) 828-1120.

Safety First in the Nursery

* To reduce the risk of SIDS and suffocation, place baby to sleep on his or her back in a crib that meets current safety standards.

* To prevent suffocation never use a pillow as a mattress for baby to sleep on or to prop baby's head or neck.

* Infants can strangle to death if their bodies pass through gaps between loose components, broken slats and other parts of the crib and their head and neck be-

come entrapped in the space.

* Do not use old, broken or modified cribs.

* Regularly tighten hardware to keep sides firm.

* Infants can suffocate in spaces between the sides of the crib and an ill fitting mattress; never allow a gap larger than two finger widths at any point between the sides of the crib and the mattress.



* Never place a crib near a window with blind or curtain cords; infants can strangle on the cords.

Source: <http://www.cpsc.gov/>

In 2009 Resolve to Be A Peninsula Saver!

Peninsula Saves is all about building a brighter financial future for individuals and families within our community. Get involved and reap the benefits! Saving toward your goal will not only help you build wealth and financial security but will also strengthen our economy.

As a Peninsula Saver, you can qualify for:

- Free workshops on how to save

and build wealth. Check on our website www.peninsulasaves.org for topics, dates, times.

- Low minimum deposit saving accounts. These include savings accounts that charge no fee or a reduced fee, offered by participating banks and credit unions.

Peninsula Saves is a broad-based coalition of nonprofit, financial, corporate and government groups which encourages indi-

viduals and families to save money so that they can build wealth. Through the delivery of information, advice, and encouragement, Peninsula Saves assists individuals who wish to pay down debt, build an emergency fund, afford a home, education, investments, or retirement in order to improve their standard of living and most important, gain peace of mind. Call 591-483 if you'd like a workshop on-site.

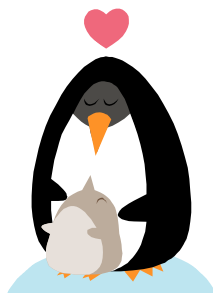
Responsive Discipline – an On-Line Parent Course

This informal personal study course provides tools for guiding and nurturing children from early childhood through adolescence.

There is nothing to mail and no tests – and there is no cost to the participant. You learn at home, at your own pace over the internet with a local connection to an Extension educator. Developed by Dr. Charles Smith at Kansas State University, this series is being made available by Johanna Hahn, Sr. Extension Agent, FCS in Newport News.

To access, go to <http://www.ext.vt.edu> then click on the

Newport News Unit link. Click on the Links to Other Sites. Scroll down to "**Responsive Discipline.**" After you register for the first time, bookmark this page and you can go directly to it next time. If you desire certification for this series, you will need to contact Johanna before moving forward.



.....
• Cost Cutting Measures Necessary
• Dear Subscriber – You'll notice I'm
• printed without colors this month. I
• must tighten my printing belt in
• order to continue offering the Car-
• ing For Your Kids newsletter at no
• cost to you. Would you like to re-
• ceive the newsletter via email or
• access it via the Extension Website?
• If so, please call or send me a mes-
• sage at jhahn@vt.edu with your
• name and email address. I will
• send you the March 2009 issue via
• email for you to enjoy in color!
• Thanks for your understanding and
• support of VCE programs. Best
• wishes and Happy New Year!
• **Johanna**
•

How to Promote Your Business During a Recession

All signs point to a coming recession in the US. This is bad news for everyone, including family child care providers. When our economy slows down, parents are laid off work and often stay home to care for their children, thus reducing the demand for child care services. At the same time, some of these parents will start offering child care in their own homes to earn more income for their families. While the supply of child care increases the demand for care decreases, making it difficult for providers to fill their spaces.

Providers need to know how to answer two questions:

1. Why should I enroll my child in your program?
2. What does your program offer that other programs don't?

Your answer will largely determine how successful you'll be. You may believe that you run a wonderful program, but unless

parents agree, you won't succeed. It's important to learn how to communicate the benefits of your program to parents.

When parents are shopping for child care, they are looking for programs of the highest quality for the money they can afford to spend. If they are looking at two programs and can't see a difference in the quality of those programs, they will choose the one that is cheaper. As our economy weakens, there will be an increasing number of providers who will lower their price to attract such parents. "I believe this is a mistake." Says Tome Copeland, Redleaf Press, St. Paul, MN. Instead, providers should put their energy into improving their communication skills and showing the benefits of their program to parents. Competing on the basis of price alone is a losing strategy. Parents want to know how your child care program will benefit their child. Providers can offer a basic description of their program

to parents: "I serve preschoolers Monday - Friday and participate on the Food Program." Use learning-related words to help them understand: "I teach your children;" "This is what your children learned yesterday."

Source: Redleaf Press, 2008

Caring For Your Kids

Published Quarterly

Editor—Johanna Hahn, Sr. Ext. Agent, FCS

The purpose of this newsletter is to offer child care providers of all varieties timely information on topics of interest to parents, providers and early childhood educators. Any commercial or brand name products named are for educational purposes only. No endorsement implied.

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

**Virginia
Cooperative
Extension**



VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

VirginiaTech
Invent the Future
www.ext.vt.edu



THE IMPORTANCE OF CHILDREN'S TOYS

Too often, we tend to consider children's play as a means of entertainment when in reality, children learn about themselves and the world around them through play. It is during play that children develop their physical, mental, social, and creative skills. If parents are the child's first playmates, child care providers can be their second. Child Care Providers can be instrumental in ensuring that children are provided with safe, age appropriate toys which will enhance their development.

Toys are the tools of play. Before purchasing toys, providers should consider the safety aspects of the toy, the physical and mental capacity of the ages of the children they keep, and the durability of the toy. Always avoid toys with small parts that

could be swallowed especially by children under three. Select unbreakable toys which are lightweight and washable. On fabric toys, check the label for "flame retardant/flame resistant" and be sure that eyes and noses on stuffed animals and dolls are securely fastened.

Caretakers should be careful that a young child is not given a toy that is intended for an older child. Age appropriate toys allow children to experience success and build confidence while more advanced toys will cause them frustration. Young babies can benefit from toys even before they can grasp as they can use their sense of sight and hearing to explore their world. They will respond to toys which make noise and display black and white images.

Young children can become very

possessive of toys and this sense of "ownership" can be a good opportunity for caregivers to teach the proper care, maintenance, and storage of toys. Children can be taught to put toys safely away after playtime.

Children of all ages should have a well balanced assortment of toys: ones for active play, ones for quiet play, ones for creative play and ones for manipulation. Also remember the value of children's books and begin reading to children as soon as they are born. *The above information was adapted from Fun Play, Safe Play from the American Toy Institute.* Donna Bock; Patti Kernodle, Child Care Specialists, Preschool Partners.

<http://www.preschoolpartnersva.org/>

