

## Congratulations are in order for the following centers:

### New Accreditations:

- Harry Pregerson Child Development Center, Los Angeles, CA
- State Street Day Care Center, Rochester, NY

### Reaccreditations:

- Colonnade Children's Center, Denver, CO
- Diplotots, Washington DC
- Federal Trade Commission Child Care Center, Washington DC
- Healthy Environments Child Development Center, San Francisco, CA
- Jamaica Kids Early Learning Center, Jamaica, NY
- Little Aviators Child Care Center, Renton, WA
- Sunny Days Early Learning Center, Riverdale, MD

NAEYC Accreditation

## Earth Day - April 22, 2009

Earth Day is a great excuse to get "down and dirty" and our child care centers all around the nation enthusiastically, and literally, "dug in" to celebrate the day!

The Building Blocks Child Development Center, located in GSA's Auburn, Washington Complex, partnered with the GSA Property Management Office to celebrate. The children enjoyed digging, raking, scooping and dumping dirt. The child care staff assisted the children as they planted tomatoes, strawberries and wildflower seeds. The children can't wait to see and taste the fruits of their labor!



Earth Day Planting Celebration at the Auburn GSA Complex

In Downtown NYC, the Butterflies/Young Toddler class at Fedkids planted lima beans and now they are carefully caring for their young seedlings.



Children at the Clinton Street Center working on their annual gardening.

At the Clinton Street Center in Syracuse, the children happily tackled their annual gardening duties of planting flowers and trees in celebration of Earth Day and Arbor Day. Thanks to their hard work, and a generous donation of plants, trees, soil, and pots by some Clinton Street parents, the flower boxes around the children's playground are now blooming with colorful petunias and marigolds. The children also planted their own young evergreen trees which they then transported home for transplanting to a site of their own choosing - either in their yard or a public location in their neighborhood.

89%  
of GSA Child Care  
Centers are Accredited

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Child Care Division

# Center News

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## Celebrating "The Week of the Young Child"

This year's "Week of the Young Child," observed from April 19th through April 25th, provided the federal community with a wonderful opportunity to help focus attention on the importance of the early years of learning. Here are just some of the highlights:



GSA's Barney Brasseaux might not be purple, but all the Fingerprint children appreciated his reading of "The Mitten".

At the Fingerprints Development Center in Washington DC, students were treated to readings of their favorite books by several GSA senior officials. GSA Deputy Administrator Barney Brasseux's reading of "Mitten" and Acting Administrator Paul Prouty's rendition of "Alexander and the Terrible Horrible No Good Very Bad Day" were thoroughly enjoyed by all. The Fingerprints Board of Directors hosted an Open House, parent appreciation breakfast and a teacher appreciation luncheon to say "thank you" and to show that it takes a partnership to ensure a healthy, happy environment for our children.



Alexander Might Have Had a Bad Day, but Prouty's reading brought smiles to everyone afterwards.

First Foundations Learning Center in Baltimore hosted several parent and child activities throughout the week.

They kicked off the celebration with an outdoor parade. Parents read books to their child's class, a special luncheon was prepared for the children to share with their parents, and on Friday, parents were invited for a play date on the playground.

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## More Information

Contributions and Comments on Center News are welcome and encouraged. Want to receive this Newsletter electronically? Sign up at [www.gsa.gov/childcare](http://www.gsa.gov/childcare)



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GSA Child Care:  
Imagineering  
Possibilities for  
Years

## TWENTIETH ANNUAL GSA CHILD CARE TRAINING CONFERENCE, JULY 21-23, 2009 IN ORLANDO, FLORIDA

### Yes, it's our twentieth!

This year's conference will be held at the Walt Disney World Buena Vista Palace Hotel located at 1900 Buena Vista Drive in Lake Buena Vista, just outside of Orlando, Florida. The conference begins Tuesday afternoon with the Regional Child Care Coordinator meetings, followed by the Welcome Reception and Award Ceremony beginning at 5:30 p.m..

Hotel reservations can be made by calling 1.866.397.6516, ask for the "GSA Child Care Training Conference" room block. The conference rate is \$109.00 plus tax, single/double occupancy (each additional adult is \$20), and children under 18 are free. There will be a resort fee in the amount of \$7.50 per room, per night. The hotel reservation cutoff date is June 19, 2009 and the conference rate will be honored three days pre and three days post based on availability at the time of reservation.

Continuing Education Units as well as Graduate and Undergraduate Credit through Portland State University (PSU) is available to conference attendees. Register on line with Portland State University at [www.ceed.pdx.edu/gsa](http://www.ceed.pdx.edu/gsa) or contact Cailin O'Connor by phone at 503.725.8324 or by email at [caoconno@pdx.edu](mailto:caoconno@pdx.edu).

For additional information about the conference, to obtain a copy of the agenda, and to register on line, visit our web site at [www.gsa.gov/child-care](http://www.gsa.gov/child-care) or call the conference hotline at 202.501.3965.

Don't miss this milestone event!

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In Syracuse, New York, the children at the Clinton Street Center were treated to readings of "Maybe a Bear Ate It" by Senior Property Manager Gary Palmer and "The Three Javelinas" by Property Manager Jay Burris.

GSA's Auburn Regional Office hosted a reading by Acting Regional Deputy Commissioner Darin Frost. Mr. Frost read, "If You Give A Mouse a Cookie" to a group of preschool children from Building Blocks Child Development Center in Auburn Washington. At the conclusion, then Acting Deputy Assistant Commissioner of Facilities Management and Services Programs, Dan Brown, served fresh baked cookies to the children and their parents.



One of the activities at First Foundations was a play date on the playground.



Children from the Building Blocks Child Development Center enjoyed "If You Give A Mouse A Cookie."

## BOARD'S BUSINESS

by Jill Rhea

### A Sneak Peak into the 20th Annual GSA Child Care Conference!

Serving on the Board of Directors for your child care center is a challenge, but help is available! GSA is always on hand to support your efforts to create and maintain a strong, successful board. This year's Child Care Conference in sunny Orlando, Florida includes a Board Track that will address a wide variety of timely issues to help you navigate the many changes and challenges that you and your nonprofit face.

This year, the Board Track includes Building a Great Board of Directors and Energizing Your Board for Fund Raising Success presented by John Elbare, MBA, CFP; Syretha Story PhD will discuss Recruiting and Retaining Board Members; and Barbara McCreedy will offer Evaluating Your Board's Operations and Developing a Strategic Plan for Success. We also look forward to sharing with you the "Stress Doc" Mark Gorkin, LICSW, who will prepare you for Practicing Safe Stress in Times of Change. These fast-paced workshops are sure to provide all board members who attend with strategies to take back to your boards and use right away.

Please come join us for stimulating discussions, learning, networking, and FUN! This will be a conference well worth the effort of attending. We look forward to seeing everyone in the magical city of Orlando! \$



## Eco-Healthy Child Care

### Plastics & Plastic Toys

Certain plastics are known to contain toxins which have negative impacts on human health. Children are particularly vulnerable to toxins since their immune systems and organs are still developing. Young children are also at greater risk since they often insert plastic objects into their mouths. Baby bottles, sippy cups, teething rings, and toys are often made with phthalates and Bisphenol-A (BPA). These two toxic ingredients in plastics are of particular concern, as research increasingly shows that these chemicals mimic hormones and disrupt normal development and growth.

#### 7 Tips for Safer Use of Plastics:

1. Avoid plastics with recycling code #3, #6, and #7.
2. Do not heat or microwave food in plastic containers, as leaching of toxic chemicals from plastic to food or liquid may occur.
3. Use PVC-free plastic wrap (buy plastic wrap and bags made with polyethylene).
4. Minimize the use of canned foods and canned drinks.
5. Choose phthalate-free toys. Look for toys labeled "phthalate-free" or "PVCfree". Choose toys made from polypropylene or polyethylene, or avoid plastic toys altogether.
6. Purchase phthalate-free beauty products.
7. Ask your dentist for BPA-free sealants and composite fillings.

Eco-Healthy Child Care is a national program created by the Oregon Environmental Council to ensure that child care settings are as healthy, safe and green as possible by reducing children's exposure to toxins. GSA is proud to partner with the Oregon Environmental Council in support of child care centers going green.

Congratulations & thank you to all for helping us achieve our first goal. Nationally, GSA centers are now 51% Eco-Healthy endorsed. Our goal was 50% by March 1.

Congratulations to the following centers which have received Eco-Healthy endorsement this quarter:

- Club Fed, Albany, NY
- BSC Kids Place, Holtsville, NY
- Fallon Federal CCC, Baltimore, MD
- Green Byrne, Philadelphia, PA
- Academy of Early Learning, Philadelphia, PA
- East Mountain, Wilkes Barre, PA
- Atlanta Federal Center Child Enrichment, Atlanta, GA
- FAA Little Flyers, College Park, GA
- Windy City Kids, Chicago, IL
- Uncle Sam's Kids, St Louis, MO
- Eagle's Loft, Ames, IA
- Day Nursery Federal Center, Indianapolis, IN
- Stars & Stripes Learning Station, Battle Creek, MI
- Centennial Mall, Lincoln, NE
- Castle Kids, New Orleans, LA
- Future Stars, Austin, TX
- A Child's Place, Forth Worth, TX
- Colonnade Children's Center, Denver, CO
- Advantage Learning Center, Lakewood, CO
- Little Aviators, Hawthorne, CA
- Pacific Preschool at Ziggurat, Laguna Niguel, CA
- GeoKids, Menlo Park, CA
- Magic Years, Richmond, CA
- Kids on Broadway, San Diego, CA
- Healthy Environments, San Francisco, CA
- Rainbow School, Honolulu, HI
- Building Blocks, Auburn, WA
- Commerce Kids, Washington, DC
- Coast Guard HQ CDC, Washington, DC
- Diplotots, Washington, DC
- National Office CDC (IRS), Washington, DC
- Sheila Watkins CDC, Washington, DC
- Triangle Tots, Washington, DC
- Greenwood Preschool, Hyattsville, MD
- Georgetown Hill (Healthy Beginnings), Rockville, MD

### More Information

If you want to know more on the EHCC Program, contact your Regional Child Care Coordinator or visit [www.oeconline.org/our-work/kidshealth/ehc](http://www.oeconline.org/our-work/kidshealth/ehc)