

Michigan Child Care Matters

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Human Services

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All About School-Agers

Where did the summer go? It seems like just yesterday that we were planning and imagining all of the things we would be doing over the summer: vacations, baseball games, picnics, and having fun just doing nothing! And then, just as we were getting good at the flexible summer schedules and lazy days, it happened. Summer is over and children are back to school. We have to return to our schedules and routines.

One of these routines may be providing a program for school-age children, typically before and after school. The importance of programs for school-age children cannot be overemphasized. The U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics reports that 47 percent of children in kindergarten through third grade and 53 percent of children in fourth through eighth grade received some child care services. Programs for school-age children keep them safe and provide them with opportunities to develop into successful adults and community members. They also provide peace of mind for working parents who know their children are engaged in positive experiences before and after school.

A good school-age program does not just happen. It takes planning to assure that the schedule, activities, equipment, and expectations for school-age children

are developmentally appropriate. There are a number of resources to assist providers in developing a high-quality school-age program.

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This publication provides relevant information regarding young children who are cared for in regulated child care settings. We encourage child care providers to make this publication available to parents of children in care or to provide them with the web address so they may receive their own copy. Most issues are available online at:

www.michigan.gov/michildcare.

UNRAVELING THE MYSTERIES OF SIX- TO TWELVE-YEAR OLDS

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The school-age period, often referred to as middle childhood, is a transition from fantasy and free-form play to group games and sports. Children in this age range are learning to relate to others and have relationships with family, friends and teachers. Over these middle years, the gradual development of a child's social skills and an increasing ability to relate to the outside world at school and with friends is apparent. In addition to the growing ability to form close relationships with other people, six- to twelve-year-olds are also learning to express and manage emotions and explore new environments.

Friendships are typically with members of the same sex and remain fairly stable over the middle childhood years. Friendship and peer acceptance becomes increasingly important and some children will exhibit certain behaviors in order to be part of the group. In some cases, this acceptance is essential for their self-esteem.

What does the typical middle childhood look like?

Six- to eight-year-olds are:

- Developing self-concept and personality traits.
- Comparing themselves to and placing value on the opinion of others.
- Beginning to feel the effects of peer pressure.
- Losing the sunny optimism of early childhood.
- Beginning to develop self-discipline.
- Interested in friends of the same gender.
- Less self-centered and more sensitive to the needs of others.
- Apt to have difficulty talking about feelings.
- Concerned with fairness and often see right and wrong as an absolute.
- Recognizing that they can experience more than one emotion at a time.
- Beginning to pay attention to cues – facial, social, situational – to interpret another's feelings.
- Becoming more responsible and independent but still seek adult support.
- Mastering physical skills.

As caregivers, it is important to remember that these children need adults who care about them, will talk to them and play with them. They need guidance, rules and limits and help with problem solving. Children may work out fears by acting out or withdrawing so helping

them express feelings appropriately when upset or worried is important. They need more love, attention and approval than criticism.

Allow time for individual and small and large group activities. Plan activities that focus on creative expression. Develop positive communication skills and discipline strategies, and model positive communication with adults and children.

Safety is important for school-age children, as they are highly active and need strenuous physical activity. They will begin to participate in more daring and adventurous behaviors, proving their competence. They should be taught to play sports in appropriate, safe, supervised areas with proper equipment and rules. Bicycles, in-line skates and other types of equipment should fit the child.

Nine- to twelve-year-olds are:

- Maturing rapidly.
- Learning to be responsible.
- Less quarrelsome and demanding.
- Experiencing rising self-esteem.
- Able to distinguish ability, effort and luck relative to success or failure.
- Learning to adapt strategies to regulate emotions.
- Able to step into someone else's shoes and show empathy.
- Becoming part of emerging peer groups.
- Becoming more aware of gender stereotypes.
- Less concerned with sibling rivalry and it tends to decrease.
- Competitive.
- Transitioning from a child-view to an adult-view of the world.
- Developing friendships that are more selective and based upon mutual trust.

Between the ages of seven and twelve, children are working through issues of self-concept, acceptance from peers and competency in the learning environment. Relationships with peers are determined by their ability to socialize and fit

in well. Family relationships are determined in part by the approval children gain from parents and siblings. Although many children tend to place a high value on the peer group, they still look primarily to parents for support and guidance. Siblings also serve as role models and as valuable supports.

A 10- or 11-year-old may have a best friend but will experience changing relationships at school. Relationships become more competitive. By 11, a child is much more interested in, and affected by, the norms of his friends. Independence is flourishing and children may begin to worry that their clothes aren't cool enough and may lose interest in attending some social functions that they adored a year ago. Although 11- and 12-year-olds are better at spreading their wings, they still need adult supervision and guidance. They are not as capable of dealing with the world as some think they are. Puberty, or sexual maturing, will begin during the latter part of this phase for most children. The world is becoming a more complex place for the child who is beginning puberty.

What does all this mean for caregivers?

In the child care setting, children from six to twelve have many different needs and abilities. Each child needs a place to keep his or her belongings. Older children will need time and a place away from younger children; they should not be expected to enjoy all the same activities. They need a nutritious snack and a flexible schedule. They may need to rest. Free time is very important; therefore, a schedule that offers a balance of free time and structured activities is recommended.

Caregivers will need to make adjustments to the rules and responsibilities expected of school-age children. Sitting down with children to revise the rules and boundaries set is a good idea. During this discussion, consequences for breaking any rules should also be discussed. Involving children in setting

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SCHOOL-AGE PROGRAMMING FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS

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Child care center licensing rules require that programs have daily planned activities. In addition to the programming required of all child care centers, school-age programs have additional requirements regarding daily planned activities.

All child care programs are required to offer activities covering a variety of developmental and learning areas. Centers are also required to implement a developmentally appropriate program that includes physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development.

Physical development occurs when children are engaged in large muscle activities indoors and outdoors as well as small muscle activities that require children to grasp and move objects. Children are constantly developing their social skills as they interact with their peers and caregivers. They can enhance their emotional development through reflection activities that encourage them to explore their own feelings and the feelings of others. Reflection is often used during discipline when a caregiver encourages a child to consider how his/her behavior affects others. Children can also expand their intellectual development through daily educational activities, the learning equipment available during free choice play and homework completion.

The following types of activities must be provided on a daily basis:

- Quiet and active.
- Individual, small group and large group.
- Large and small muscle.
- Child-initiated and staff-initiated.
- Early math and science experiences.

- Language and literacy experiences accumulating to at least 30 minutes.
- Outdoor play for programs where children are in attendance for five or more continuous hours.

The required types of activities are easy to implement, and many activities cover several areas simultaneously.



Quiet, individual activities can include reading and homework completion. Large and small muscle activities can be completed individually or in small or large groups. Almost all of the activities described above can either be child- or staff-initiated. Child-initiated activities require

a child to choose the activity he/she would like to do. Staff-initiated activities occur when the caregiver chooses and leads an activity.

Language and literacy and science and math experiences can be implemented through planned daily activities, such as arts and crafts, projects and experiments. They can also be implemented through the types of equipment and materials available to the children during free choice play.

Experiments involving concepts such as weights and measures, static electricity, gravity, cause and effect, and chemical reactions are great activities that explore science. Cooking activities and recipes for making things such as play dough, clay and sidewalk chalk are great for learning the states of matter and how different elements mixed together react to create an end product. These activities can also be a great way to teach children math concepts

by exploring measurements and converting recipes to make larger or smaller batches.

Language and literacy activities include having children write short stories, poems and plays as well as read them out loud or perform them for the group. Journaling allows children to express their ideas and feelings through writing or drawing pictures. Learning different languages is also a great way to expand these skills. Listening to music, singing songs and engaging children in conversation also enhances language and literacy skills.

For age-appropriate equipment and materials that can be used to implement these programming areas, see “Equipping a School-Age Program” on pages 10 and 11.

In addition to the above listed requirements, R 400.5303(1) and (2) require that school-age programs provide planned activities that reflect the interests and abilities of the children enrolled. These activities should supplement the areas of development not regularly provided for during the school day.

The program must also allow opportunities for each child to:

- Plan, carry out and evaluate the program and his or her individual activities.
- Experience a diversity of activities within the program and community.
- Participate in relaxation and recreational activities.

Offering planned activities that reflect the interests and abilities of school-agers engages the children in the program and provides for an enjoyable experience. The activities planned should provide an enriching contrast to the formal school program. Communicating with elementary and middle school teachers to learn the concepts being taught in the classroom can help caregivers plan activities that expand on these learning areas.

It is important to include children in the planning

and implementation of activities. Allow children to brainstorm weekly or monthly themes and the activities associated with them. Take their ideas and put them into a daily schedule. The children can help implement the program by teaching an activity to other children and assisting young school-agers with completing their projects. They can also help by passing out supplies and cleaning up after the activity is complete. Encourage the children to evaluate the activities. Ask them what they liked and disliked and how they would change the activity for future implementation.

School-age children are less egocentric than their younger counterparts. Interacting in the larger community and engaging in community service projects will help enrich their child care experience. Field trips to museums, libraries, senior citizen homes, and other locations are an easy way to engage children in the community.

For centers that do not provide transportation, consider places within walking distance. Resources within the community can also be accessed. Having people, such as police officers, firefighters and animal control personnel, come speak to the children is a great way to help them learn about their community.

A wide variety of community service projects can also occur within a child care facility. Implement a recycling program in the center and use it as a learning experience. Brainstorm ways to beautify the area. Pick-up litter at a park or playground. Have the children wear gloves and warn them not to touch any items that could potentially be dangerous. This can be done to improve the facility’s grounds as well.

It is important to teach children to always think of those less fortunate. Start a toy drive or a food or toiletry collection to donate to local families who need help. The children can plant

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POSITIVE GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE FOR SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

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School-age children are able to follow rules, respond to commands, deal with frustrations, and exhibit self-control. However, they can also misbehave intentionally to test limits set by caregivers and engage in dangerous or disruptive behaviors. There are a variety of positive guidance and discipline techniques that can be used to decrease occurrences of negative behavior. It is important to remember that school-age children vary greatly in age and development. Some of these techniques will work better than others, depending on the age and stage of the child.

Offering positive praise to children when they are exhibiting appropriate behavior provides them with the positive attention they crave. Make sure to praise the child's specific behavior, such as "You're coloring your picture very carefully" instead of just saying, "You're doing great" or "Good job." This tells the child exactly what is being done correctly.



It is also important to tell children what you want them to do, instead of telling them what they are doing wrong. Instead of saying, "Stop running," tell the child to "Slow down and walk." School-agers may still be unsure of what is acceptable behavior and may need gentle reminders of how they should behave. Make sure the center's rules are clear so children know what is expected of them. Also, ensure the rules are developmentally appropriate for the varying ages of the children in the program.

School-age children want to feel independent and capable of doing things on their own. Foster this desire by encouraging them to do things for themselves and help them learn new skills.

If they fail, praise them for their effort and encourage them to continue practicing.

Allowing school-agers to burn off excess energy can help decrease negative behaviors. This is especially important at the end of the school day since the children have been sitting for a long period of time. Offering a wide variety of interesting activities that engage the children can also decrease negative behaviors caused by boredom. Ensure activities are appropriate for the various ages of children and if not, modify the activities as necessary.

Punishment and positive discipline are very different. Punishment involves shame, ridicule or threats and scares children into stopping their behavior. Positive discipline involves helping children make good choices and learn self-control. This is more time-consuming than punishment, but over time is the most effective method.

School-age children are faced with problems that they may not have the skills to solve and can sometimes result in negative behavior. Helping children identify the problem and possible solutions teaches them how to solve future problems on their own. Involving children also helps them realize that other, more acceptable solutions are available.

School-agers are able to describe how they feel but may still have a hard time understanding how their actions affect others. When a child breaks a rule, a caregiver can explain how the child's actions make the caregiver feel.

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SCHOOL-AGE PROGRAM EXEMPTION: AN ALTERNATIVE

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The Child Care Organizations Act (1973 PA 116) provides the statutory basis for the regulation of child care facilities. Section 5 of PA 116 requires on-site inspections of child care centers at the time of original issuance and at renewal. Child care centers that serve school-age children may request an exemption from the on-site inspections based on Section 1(2) of PA 116.

There are two types of exemptions available. For programs that serve exclusively school-age children, a full exemption may be granted. For programs that serve both school-age and younger children, a partial exemption may be granted to the school-age portion of the program.

To be eligible for an exemption, the program must meet all of the following requirements:

- Be currently licensed or approved.
- Be in operation and licensed or approved for a minimum of two years prior to the exemption request.
- Have no substantial violations of PA 116 or licensing rules during the two years preceding the request.
- Provide a resolution adopted by the school board, board of directors or governing body that supports the exemption application.

To obtain an exemption, the center must submit an application and attach a copy of the resolution approval. If there have been no substantial violations and the center was not placed on a provisional license within the past two years, the exemption will be processed.

If the center had been cited for substantial violations or issued a provisional license, the matter would require further review.

Facilities granted an exemption from inspections:

- Must comply with all licensing rules and PA 116.
- Must provide annual documentation of compliance with PA 116 and the licensing rules.
- Are subject to special investigations upon receipt of allegations of violations of the rules or PA 116.

- May lose exempt status in the event of substantial violations of the rules or PA 116.

- Are not subject to renewal/interim inspections of the school-age portion of the program.

A school-age child means a child who is eligible to be enrolled in a grade of kindergarten or above but is less than 13 years of age.

Centers granted a full or partial exemption must complete and submit a modified renewal packet which includes the annual self-certification of compliance. The renewal paperwork is reviewed, and if satisfactory, the renewal is processed for the fully exempt center. For the partially exempt center, an on-site inspection is completed on all components of the program except the school-age one. If that inspection is satisfactory, the license is then renewed. Additionally, all exempt centers must complete the annual self-certification of compliance form on the year between renewals. The department mails this form.

If a fully exempt center wishes to add an infant/

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THE UNIQUE CHALLENGES OF MIXED AGE GROUPS IN HOME CHILD CARE

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One of the most difficult tasks of running a home child care is being able to meet the needs of children at a wide range of ages. Successfully balancing the needs of infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children all in the same space takes some careful planning and creative space set up on your part. During the summer when school-age children spend the entire day in your child care home, providing individualized care can be especially difficult. School-age children require challenging activities and can easily become bored with toys and games that may be geared towards younger children.

Here are some suggestions to make the most of mixed-age groups in your child care home:

- Give school-age children their own space, whenever possible, with age-appropriate books, toys and games. This promotes safety as younger children will not have access to items that may not be safe for them.
- Provide open-ended materials such as Legos, books, blocks, art supplies, and dramatic play items that can be safely used by most age groups.
- Offer a range of choices of activities and rotate toys, games and books so that children in care do not get bored.
- Find group activities that all children in care can participate in, such as gardening. School-age children will be able to do more complex tasks such as planting and harvesting while younger children can do simpler tasks such as digging and watering.

Get those children outside for fresh air and exercise! Children should not be inactive for long periods of time. Licensing rules require that all children, including infants and toddlers, go outside everyday. Outdoors is the perfect setting to have school-age children participate in scavenger hunts or nature walks.

Having a theme each week is a great way to engage children of all ages in your child care. Each week, plan out a different theme, such as camping, insects, under the sea. Themes prevent boredom in older children and promote learning. You can have different crafts related to that theme, such as making a wave bottle with equal parts oil and colored water for under the sea week. Older children will enjoy making these and younger children will enjoy playing with them. You can also have your snacks fit that week's theme, such as blue Jello with gummy fish in it for under the sea week and ants on a log (celery with peanut butter and raisins) for insect week. You can pick out books relating to that week's theme from your local library. For example, you can read "The Hungry Caterpillar" to younger children while providing books about bugs for older children to read during insect week. Themes can also be brought into outdoor play with children setting up small tents for camping week. Children can also see how many bugs they can identify and capture non-stinging insects in plastic jars for closer inspection for insect week.

Through careful planning, you can successfully engage all children in a mixed-age setting. For additional ideas, go to the Resources link on the Child Care Licensing website at (www.michigan.gov/michildcare). Here you will find a link to an Afterschool Training Toolkit with a wealth of ideas. ❖

Mysteries of Six- to Twelve-Year Olds, from page 3

rules and boundaries will help them remember the rules. They will still need reminders, but as they mature, they will become better at accepting and remembering rules. Give them opportunities to feel responsible.

There is no doubt that the ages of six to twelve are interesting years in a child's social and emotional development. Remember, while these are common guidelines, all children will develop individually and most will not fit into any one category completely. Children's behavior changes as they grow. Being knowledgeable about middle childhood can help you guide them, plan activities for them, understand them, and most of all, enjoy them! ❖

School-Age Programming for Child Care Centers, from page 5

a community garden and allow those living nearby to harvest the produce. The produce can also be donated to a local food bank or shelter. Warm blankets and pet toys can also be collected for animal shelters. Cards and letters can be written to servicemen and women or elderly people living in local senior homes. There are many more easily implemented ideas for community service projects available on the Internet. Allow the children to choose the service projects in which they would like to participate.

This may seem like a lot of programming to pack into a before or after school session, but many of these areas can be implemented simultaneously. Full- and part-day programs allow for a greater expansion on the ideas in this article and for a wider variety of activities to be planned throughout the day. When these ideas are utilized, in addition to ideas available on the Internet, in program planning books and brainstormed by caregivers and the children in care, school-aged programming can be easy and fun to plan for and to implement. ❖

Positive Guidance and Discipline, from page 6

An example of this would be, "When you jump off the swing, I am afraid that you will get hurt." This explains to them how their behavior has an impact on others. Children can also use this technique with each other to describe how another child's behavior makes them feel. The next time a child is tempted to break a rule, he/she may consider how his/her actions could affect others.

There are two types of consequences, natural and logical, that teach children the connection between their actions and the results of their actions. A natural consequence is a result that occurs without any adult interference. The child who plays rough with toys will experience a natural consequence when the toy breaks and it can no longer be used. A logical consequence occurs when an adult intervenes. If a child does not pick up a game when he/she is done using it, the adult will tell the child that he/she cannot move on to the next activity. Whether natural or logical, consequences help the child understand that all behaviors have an effect.

As a caregiver, you may find you need to use a variety of positive guidance and discipline methods with school-age children. Not every method will work for every child, and it may take more than one to solve a problem. Having a variety of techniques available and preventing negative behavior will make caring for school-agers a fun experience for all. ❖

EQUIPPING A SCHOOL-AGE PROGRAM

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A school-age classroom encompasses a wide age span; therefore, school-age children's developmental levels vary greatly. A five-year-old child may enjoy a game such as Candyland, while a ten-year-old child needs a game with more strategy and skill. Equipping a school-age program can be a challenge. It is important to make sure that children from kindergarten through middle school have the right equipment in their mixed-age classrooms. Here are some areas to be included when planning a school-age classroom:

- **Storage Space** – Include cubbies/storage bins or lockers that offer a warm invitation for children and parents.
- **Large Motor** – School-age children are very active and both an indoor and outdoor area for large motor activities should be included.
- **Dramatic Play** – Include a wide range of pretend play items for all ages.
- **Blocks/Construction** – Block play is fundamental to all forms of development. A large area for block and construction play should be reserved.
- **Creative Art/Mealtime** – Art materials should be readily accessible and finished projects should be beautifully displayed. Tables can be used for art and mealtimes.
- **Sensory/Sand and Water/Science** – This area should be near the sink and, if possible, the door to the outdoor play area.
- **Books/Language/Music** – Writing, listening, reading, and study stations should be set up as quiet areas that encourage focused work. This includes homework that children may choose to complete while at the program.
- **Perceptual Motor Games/Manipulatives/Math** – Shelves with these items can be placed near tables for ease of use.

A variety of toys and equipment will keep children engaged in constructive activities in their school-age program. Below is a table of ideas for equipping a school-age program:

Classroom Furnishings	Refrigerator Area rugs Large rug Cubbies/lockers/storage bins Child access shelves	Double-sided library audio center cabinet Computer table Loft system Room dividers/shelves	Tables Chairs Couch Dry erase board
Large Motor	Hula hoops Balance beam Ring toss Tumbling mats Various sized balls Bean bags Jump ropes	Low basketball hoop Larger basketball hoop Frisbees Volleyball net and ball T-ball pole and accessories Bikes and helmets	Badminton supplies Floor hockey sticks and pucks Plastic rubber cones Toss and catch games Large parachute Kites
Dramatic Play	Doll house, furniture and figures Variety of dolls Doll accessories Dress-up clothes/costumes	Mirrors Action figures Props for theatre play Large play kitchen and accessories	Fantasy items (e.g., dinosaurs, story characters) Leisure items (e.g., camping, sports) Writing materials

Blocks/ Construction	Waffle blocks Snap blocks Wood blocks Large soft blocks Interlocking blocks (e.g., Legos, Duplos) Plastic blocks Unit blocks Hollow blocks Homemade blocks	Large trucks/cars Toy people Tunnel/bridge set Town/street play mat Train set Street signs Workbench Safety goggles Tool box Planks	Derrick/pulleys Tools, tool belts, hats Carpentry tools Scrap and soft wood Plastic crates Tri-wall cardboard Plastic/wood wheels, nuts, bolts Lincoln Logs Connectors Matchbox cars
Creative/Art	Crayons, markers, chalk, pencils A variety of paints Paintbrushes Easel and easel paper Drying rack Play dough and accessories Pottery	Drawing paper Collage materials - cards, wrapping paper, stickers, cotton balls, pom poms, yarn, ribbon, nature items, feathers, felt, sequins Glitter	Stapler, tape, glue/paste Scissors Hole punchers Beads of various sizes Sewing Weaving loom Clay
Sensory/ Sand and Water/ Science	Sand/water table Treasure hunt items Boats Dump trucks and bulldozers Sand set with buckets, scoops, rakes, trowels, sieves, molds Plastic scoops and funnels Floating toys Plastic fish and fishing rods	Dump/fill buckets Dishes Sponges Magnets Magnetic wands Magnifying glasses Plastic color paddles Large shells Pinecones Dinosaur set	Rocks, insects Rain gauge Cooking materials Gardening materials Prism Alphabet molds Water pump or water/sand wheel Weather charts Thermometer
Books/ Language/ Music	Portable CD player and music CDs Listening center Ribbons, scarves and other dance props Instruments Variety of books/magazines	Tactile letters Sequencing, shapes and patterns cards Flannel board with easel Flannel board stories Felt letters and shapes	Magnetic letter set Small chalkboards Letters and numbers stamp set Letter and word cards Word games Board games
Perceptual Motor Games/ Math/ Manipulatives	Plastic and metal building toys (e.g., Legos, gears, Tinker Toys, erector sets) Beads and string Puzzles Models (e.g., airplanes, cars) Pick-up sticks	Jacks Marbles Pattern activity kit Weight kit Measurement kit Number and math cards Calculators	Demonstration clock Play money Stopwatches Math card and board games (e.g., Uno, Monopoly) Chess Checkers ♠

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® MICHIGAN is a statewide scholarship program designed to help child care center directors, teachers, assistants and owners, and family and group home child care providers attend school and achieve their professional development goals. For more information, call (866) MITEACH [(866) 648-3224].

NORMAL SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

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Sexual development in children is just like development in any other domain; it begins at birth, matures with age, and children need guidance all along the way. Parents and caregivers often shy away from talking to children about sexual development because the topic can be uncomfortable and even considered taboo. Though talking about sexual development can be awkward, providing children with accurate, age-appropriate information is one of the most important things parents and caregivers can do to make sure children grow up safe, healthy and secure in their bodies.

Research on sexual behavior of children ages two to twelve years has documented that:

- Sexual responses are present from birth.
- A wide range of sexual behaviors for this age range are normal and non-problematic.
- Increasing numbers of school-age children are being identified with inappropriate or aggressive sexual behavior. It is not clear if this increase reflects an increase in the actual number of incidents or an increase in identification and reporting.
- Sexual development and behavior are influenced by social, familial and cultural factors as well as genetics and biology.

As children grow and interact more with peers, they become more aware of the differences between boys and girls. Concepts of love and affection begin to develop, evolving into behaviors and questions. By early school-age, children are interested in body parts and functions and may experiment with naughty words to name or describe body parts even if they don't know what that word actually means. They may begin to explore body parts with their peers by playing games like doctor or house where they may copy adult behaviors such as holding hands and kissing.

Pre-adolescent children (ages 10-12) are more focused on social relationships and expectations and begin to experience clearer sexual feelings. Children may play games with peers that involve sexual behavior such as truth or dare or boyfriend/girlfriend. Children try to view or listen to sexual content in movies, television programming, songs, and games and on the internet. They may also ask more questions about sexual matters.

Most sexual play is an expression of children's natural curiosity and should not be a cause for concern or alarm. In general, typical childhood sexual play and exploration:

- Occurs between children who play together regularly and know each other well.
- Occurs between children of the same general age and physical size.
- Is spontaneous and unplanned.
- Is infrequent.
- Is voluntary. The children agreed to the behavior; none of the involved children seem uncomfortable or upset.
- Is easily diverted when parents or caregivers tell children to stop and explain privacy rules.

Sexual development and sexual play are natural, but it is important to distinguish between age-appropriate and inappropriate sexual behaviors. Typical sexual behaviors are usually not overtly sexual, are more exploratory and playful in nature, do not show a preoccupation with sexual interactions, and are not hostile, aggressive or hurtful to self or others.

Toni Cavanagh Johnson, a psychologist specializing in childhood sexual development, lists the following indicators of concern in children up to the age of 12:

- A preoccupation with sexual play.

- An engagement in sexual play with much younger or much older children.
- A precocious knowledge of sex beyond their age.
- An inability to stop when told to by an adult.
- Sexual play that leads to complaints or has a negative effect on other children and/or causes physical or emotional discomfort to themselves or others.
- Sexualization of relationships or viewing others as objects for sexual interactions.
- Children aged four and older who don't understand the rights and boundaries of other children in sexual play.
- Experiencing fear, shame or guilt in their sexual play.
- Engaging in adult-type sexual activities with other children.
- Using sex to hurt others.
- Using bribery, threats or force to engage other children in sexual play.

If you are made aware of a situation of children playing sexual games while in your care, it is very important to talk calmly to all the children involved separately. You must figure out what actually happened. Ask the children involved open-ended questions as much as possible, so the children can tell what happened in their own words rather than answering yes or no. A few questions you could ask are: "What were you doing?", "How did you learn about this?", "How did you get the idea?", and "How did you feel about doing it?" The scenario should be understood from the child's perspective. It is important to remove the adult lens and see the behavior from the child's point of view. You may determine that the behavior was simply natural curiosity. This would be a perfect opportunity to teach children about healthy boundaries and rules about sexual behavior. It is also important to talk to the parents because they may have differing opinions on appropriate sexual behavior.

Licensing consultants investigate complaints regarding incidents of inappropriate touching

or behavior between children. They look into whether the child care provider is providing appropriate care and supervision. They try to obtain a clear understanding of the particular incident by asking:

- Who was involved?
- What precipitated the incident?
- What were the reactions of the children?
- How many times has something like this happened? Did the caregiver have previous knowledge?
- Where were the caregivers?
- What were parents told?
- How do the parents feel about the incident?

You may wonder how appropriate care and supervision applies if you didn't know two children were going to start a game of doctor or touch each other inappropriately. Even if an incident of inappropriate touching or play is determined to be part of normal sexual development, it still must be taken seriously. As soon as you become aware that a situation of inappropriate touching or play has occurred, you, as the child care provider, must develop a child-specific plan with the parents and the children's direct caregivers to prevent another incident from occurring. For example:

- If you know a group of children played doctor and touched each other inappropriately, then those children need more direct supervision.
- If you know that a school-age child has touched a toddler inappropriately, then that school-age child should not be left alone in a room with other children, especially younger children.
- If you know that at naptime a child pretends to sleep and then, when the caregiver isn't looking, gets on another child's cot and touches him/her under the covers, then a caregiver needs to stay next to that child during naptime.

Remember it is also important that you share the plan of action with any other caregivers

Continued on page 16

PLAY WITH A PURPOSE

Gail Crosby, West Midland Family Center Program Director
Midland County

The Play with a Purpose program is a literacy-based, fun-filled adventure program with an emphasis on social skill building. This program is a collaborative community project provided by West Midland Family Center (WMFC). The seven-week summer program serves children who are entering kindergarten, first or second grade. This past summer 65 children attended Monday through Thursday from 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., with an opportunity for before or after care. Each classroom consisted of 15 children, two caregivers, a teen volunteer, and a parent volunteer that developed into a warm, nurturing environment for everyone.

Learning through play was the primary mode of delivery throughout the entire program. We believe that learning through play is important for the growth of every young child – emotionally, academically and socially.

Program Goals

Cognitive Development:

- Develop an ability to match, group and identify common properties and/or relationships.
- Explore what comes next in a series of objects or events.
- Experiment with creative movement, dance and rhythmic activities.
- Use the scientific process - make observations, suggest reasons why things happen, test suggestions, observe results, and derive conclusions.

Physical Development:

- Practice large motor skills - movement, balance, body/space perception.
- Refine fine motor skills by manipulating and controlling objects.

Social/Emotional Development:

- Develop trust and initiative.
- Gain confidence in abilities.
- Develop a sense of achievement and pride.

- Express needs and feelings with appropriate words and actions.
- Increase understanding of and have empathy for others.
- Develop strategies to control impulses, join in play and resolve conflicts.
- Share materials and take turns.

Language Development:

- Expand ability to construct meaningful sentences. Verbally express feelings and describe objects and events.
- Make and respond to requests, ask questions and give directions.
- Practice taking turns in conversations.
- Increase awareness of picture and print symbols, including letters and numerals.
- Develop an understanding and appreciation for stories, poems, finger plays, and songs.

Self-Help Development:

- Make choices and decisions.
- Learn about mealtime – serving, eating, cleaning, etc.
- Request assistance when needed.
- Identify, observe and practice safety procedures.
- Attempt new and/or challenging activities.
- Develop a sense of responsibility for themselves, belongings and environment.
- Develop ideas and suggest materials for the classroom.
- Decide what to study.

The program's strengths were in the community partners who dedicated themselves to meeting the needs of young children and their families.

The most significant partner in the project was the Bullock Creek School District who provided an entire wing of Floyd Elementary School to be transformed into an early childhood center. They also shared in providing transportation for many of the students.

During the school year, Floyd Elementary School has the unique ability to offer students in kindergarten and first grade the opportunity to visit the Diagnostic Reading Lab (DRL). Children are divided into small groups and receive an extra 30 minutes a day of supplemental support in all areas of literacy. Together Floyd Elementary School and WMFC combined efforts so that these students continued to receive those extra 30 minutes daily throughout the summer. Additionally, children received a wide variety of literacy and other opportunities throughout the day by the summer staff. Children took part in alphabet scavenger hunts, made letters in mud, wrote stories in chalk, created nature journals, wrote and illustrated books, just to name a few.

In addition, every child participated in the Grace A. Dow Library Summer Reading Program and 95 percent of the children reached the highest level possible during the program. Children read independently and/or were read to for a minimum of 30 minutes each day, not counting the DRL.

Sergeant Safety (a WMFC staff person) shared weekly safety information and Captain Composter (a puppet) shared tips and activities to teach children about going green by reusing, reducing and recycling.

Lunch and snack were made possible through funding from the United States Department of Agriculture Summer Food Program and the Salvation Army of Midland County.

Joyce Epstein's 2004 research demonstrated that parental involvement is a critical component of the learning process. Research has shown that programs with a strong parent involvement and schools that relate well to their communities have students who outperform other schools. With fewer dollars to address the need for a healthy adult to child ratio, WMFC solicited the help of parents. Twenty parents joined our Connect & Serve volunteer program and received training in basic child development

and Conscious Discipline (developed by Dr. Becky Bailey). Those parents then volunteered throughout the summer as classroom assistants. It was a unique experience for the parents as they learned techniques to help children learn. At the end of the program, parents' surveys indicated that the majority of them would be willing to volunteer for their children's programs in the future.

Teen volunteers also added to the richness of the program. The teens received training on child development and health and safety, as well as Conscious Discipline. The teens took their jobs very seriously and were amazing additions to the program.

Another part of this program was a parent education group called Capable Kids. Capable Kids is an adult program designed to facilitate the at-home relationship between parents and their children, bridging the gap between parenting and education. This dynamic collaboration has inspired some parents to further their own academic success.

There were many others who also contributed to the success of the program including our funders. By working together, we can provide much more for our children and families than we could ever provide on our own. It is truly a win-win for everyone. ❖

Director's Corner, from page 1

Model Standards for Out-of-School Time/ After-School Programs in Michigan - this document (available under Resources at www.michigan.gov/michildcare) identifies the six critical components for out-of-school time programs for which quality standards have been established. These components are:

- Health, Safety, and Nutrition.
- Human Relationships and Staffing.
- Indoor and Outdoor Environment.
- Program and Activities.
- Administration.
- Single-Purpose Programs.

The **Michigan After-School Partnership** (www.miafterschool.org) is an organization whose goal is to support programs and communities in understanding and identifying quality programs. It is open to individuals, organizations and regional/local coalitions interested in promoting, increasing access to and sustaining quality out-of-school programs and partnerships for children and youth.

The **Michigan AfterSchool Association** (www.miafterschool.com) is the state affiliate of the National AfterSchool Association, whose mission is to build a profession that develops, supports and promotes quality after-school programs for children and youth. The Michigan AfterSchool Association supports the Michigan School-Age Youth Development Certificate and the Michigan School-Age Youth Development Credential (formerly the Michigan School-Age Credential). To learn more about the certificate and the credential, contact the Michigan AfterSchool Association at (517) 241-4290 or visit their website.

I hope this issue of Michigan Child Care Matters inspires you to look at your school-age program with an eye towards improving its quality.

James S. Sinnamon, Director
Child Care Licensing Division

School-Age Program Exemption: An Alternative, from page 7

toddler or preschool component, a modification request is required. Once the modification is processed, the license exempt status is changed from a full to a partial exemption.

A special investigation will be initiated on any exempt center if an allegation of a rule or act violation is received. If the licensing consultant observes a rule violation on the school-age component of a partially exempt program, a special investigation will also be initiated. If any investigation warrants the issuance of a provisional license, the center's exempt status will be re-evaluated and may be rescinded.

If you are interested in exploring this further, please contact your licensing consultant. ❖

Normal Sexual Development of School-Age Children, from page 13

working with the children, including substitutes, to ensure everyone is able to provide appropriate care and supervision. When a plan of action to prevent inappropriate behavior from reoccurring is not developed and executed, the other children in care are not being protected from potential incidents.

As a child care provider, it is your responsibility to keep all the children in your care safe. In order to do that, you need to be knowledgeable of appropriate and inappropriate behaviors, have open communication with the parents you serve, know your children, be able to develop a strong plan of action to prevent incidents from reoccurring, and know your community resources. If you are concerned about a child's behavior, discuss it with the child's parents. It is important to remember that inappropriate sexual behavior in children is not a clear indicator that a child has been sexually abused. However, if you suspect a child is being sexually abused, you are required to make a report to Children's Protective Services [(800) 942-4357]. ❖

54321GO! BE FIT. LOOK GOOD. BE STRONG.

Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan Coalition

Raising a healthy family is a goal for many parents. To help prevent childhood obesity, the Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan Coalition launched a simple message. **54321GO!** focuses on daily goals that families and child care providers can work toward to achieve a healthy lifestyle.

5: Eat more than 5 servings of fruits and vegetables.

Try different fruit and vegetable colors since they all give our bodies something different that it needs to stay healthy.

4: Drink 4 glasses of water.

Four glasses of water every day in place of soda, punches, fruit drinks, and energy and sports drinks. Fill up a reusable water bottle!

3: Get 3 servings of low-fat dairy food.

Low-fat cheese, low-fat yogurt and 1% or skim milk are healthy choices full of calcium for building strong bones.

2: Spend less than 2 hours at a television or computer.

Get unplugged! Screen time includes television, DVDs, video games, hand-held electronics and computer time. This will help keep kids moving and limit the amount of advertising they see for high-sugar, high-fat foods.

1: Take 1 full hour to get a runnin' and a jumpin'.

Keeps kids active and moving! Not only can activity help keep kids healthy, but movement can help them focus as well.

GO! For a healthier you! ❖

Attention Family and Group Home Providers

Changes have been made to the Child Care Organizations Act (1973 PA 116) that require:

- Criminal history checks on assistant caregivers prior to making an offer of employment.
- Establishing and maintaining a policy regarding supervision of volunteers.

See the Technical Assistance and Consultation Manual for rules 400.1903(5), 400.1904(1)(d) and 400.1906(1)(d) - (g) for more information on complying with these changes.

www.michigan.gov/michildcare-ta

Federal Mandatory Crib Standard Changes

In December 2010, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) approved new federal mandatory standards for full-size and non-full-size baby cribs under Section 104(c) of the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008. The mandatory crib standards: (1) stop the manufacture and sale of traditional drop-side cribs; (2) make mattress supports stronger; (3) make crib hardware more durable; and (4) make safety testing more rigorous.

Since June 28, 2011, all cribs sold in the United States are required to meet the new standards. It is now illegal to manufacture, sell, resell, offer, donate, provide for use, or otherwise place in the stream of commerce a crib that does not comply with the CPSC's new standards for full-size and non-full-size cribs. This includes manufacturers, retail stores, Internet retailers, resale shops, auction sites, and any individual sales.

Per the new standards, **all child care providers will have to replace all cribs not meeting the new standards by December 28, 2012.**

According to the CPSC, **all cribs made prior to July 2010 do not meet the new standards.** Non-drop side cribs manufactured between July 2010 and June 2011 may meet the new standards. To determine if the crib meets the new standards, contact the manufacturer or retailer to obtain a Certificate of Compliance (COC). The COC must:

- Describe the product.
- Give the name, full mailing address and telephone number for the importer or domestic manufacturer.
- Identify the rule for which it complies (16 CFR 1219, the new federal standard for full-size cribs or 16 CFR 1220, the new federal standard for non-full-size cribs).
- Give the name, full mailing address, email address and telephone number for the records keeper and location of testing lab.
- Give the date and location of manufacture and testing.

To determine when your crib was manufactured, check the crib. All cribs must have their date of manufacture permanently affixed to the crib.

Stackable Cribs - All stackable cribs must be replaced. Michigan licensing rules [R 400.5204(9) & (10)] require centers to replace stackable cribs with non-stackable cribs.

When disposing of cribs that do not meet the new standards, it is recommended that you dismantle them. You are prohibited from selling or donating cribs that do not meet the new standards. Crib mattresses do not need to be replaced. Home child care providers can continue to use Pack N' Plays.

For frequently asked questions regarding the new crib standards, go to the CPSC website at www.cpsc.gov/onsafety/2011/03/the-new-crib-standard-questions-and-answers/. You can also go to the CPSC's Crib Information Center website at www.cpsc.gov/cribs.

If you have any additional questions, please contact your licensing consultant.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Michigan After-school Collaborative
Conference
October 13-14, 2011
Sterling Heights, Mich.
www.miafterschool.com

Early On® Annual Conference
November 3-4, 2011
Acme, Mich.
<http://eotta.ccesa.org>
(866) 334-5437

Child Abuse and Neglect Conference:
Prevention, Assessment & Treatment
October 17-18, 2011
Plymouth, Mich.
<http://cme.med.umich.edu/events>

Michigan Collaborative Early Childhood
Conference
January 25-27, 2012
Dearborn, Mich.
www.miaeyc.org

MiAEYC Infant Toddler Conference
October 28, 2011
Detroit, Mich.
www.miaeyc.org

Preschool Teacher's Association
Spring Workshop
March 1, 2012
Livonia, Mich.
www.preschoolteachersassociation.com

Preschool Teacher's Association
Fall Conference
November 2, 2011
Livonia, Mich.
www.preschoolteachersassociation.com

Star Power 2012
May 16, 2012
Capital Lawn, Lansing, Mich.
<http://greatstartforkids.org/star-power/starpower2012>

Great Start CONNECT

If you are a regulated early learning and care provider, Great Start CONNECT can help you reach out to parents needing your services. This online resource matches families searching for quality care in their neighborhoods and local communities to early learning and care that fits their needs. Great Start CONNECT also gives you, the provider, an easy-to-use place to update your provider profile that appears to families when they search. You can also search and register for professional development opportunities to improve your quality of care.

Visit www.greatstartconnect.org and log in using the Provider tab. You must provide an email address and a password. Take advantage of the newly posted provider user guides available through a quick link on the home page. Update and outreach today!

ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CLASSES

Great Start CONNECT, www.greatstartconnect.org, (877) 61GreatStart [(877) 614-7328].

HighScope Training Opportunities, www.highscope.org, (734) 485-2000, ext. 234.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
 BUREAU OF CHILDREN AND ADULT LICENSING
 7109 W. SAGINAW, 2ND FLOOR
 P.O. BOX 30650
 LANSING, MI 48909

PRSR STD
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 Lansing, Michigan
 Permit No. 1200



CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION (CPSC) INFANT/CHILD PRODUCT RECALLS (not including toys)

These recalls have been added since Issue 90 of MCCM (May 2011):

- Table-top clip-on chair Recalled by phil&teds USA due to fall and amputation hazards.
- Strollers recalled by phil&teds USA due to risk of injury from brake failure.
- Child safety latches and outlet covers recalled by Prime-Line; screw breaks can allow unintended access.
- Swing sets recalled by Adventure Playsets due to fall hazard.
- Britax recalls B-Nimble strollers due to risk of brake failure.
- Child's entrapment death prompts Big Lots recall of metal futon bunk beds.
- Target expands recall of child booster seats following additional reports of falls.
- Lan Enterprises recalls Zooper Strollers due to strangulation hazard.
- Dream On Me recalls drop-side cribs due to entrapment, suffocation, laceration, and fall hazards.
- Additional fingertip amputations and lacerations prompt reannouncement of November 2009 recall of strollers by Maclaren USA.
- CPSC Alert: Consumers urged to stop using phil&teds USA clip-on chairs due to serious dangers posed to children.
- Dorel Asia recalls to repair bunk beds due to collapse and fall hazards.

Details on these product recalls may be obtained on the CPSC's website at www.cpsc.gov.

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