Michigan Child Care Matters

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Licensing consultants wear many different hats. On some days they are regulators enforcing administrative rules and statutes. Other times they are mentors and coaches, offering technical assistance to licensees trying to meet minimum rule requirements. And then there are the times they are consultants, offering suggestions and providing the rationale for improving the quality of child care in homes and centers. Your licensing consultant can be an important part of your team. Talk with your consultant when you have questions about a specific issue or rule.

With a new school year starting, this is a good time to remind you of some recent changes to the childhood immunization schedule that consultants use when determining rule compliance.

As of January 1, 2007, a new vaccine requirement for children enrolled in licensed child care centers in Michigan went into effect. Children enrolled in child care centers must now receive the completed series of the **pneumococcal conjugate (PCV7)** vaccine, Prevnar®, which is already part of the childhood immunization schedule recommended by the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and the American Academy of Pediatrics. Prevnar® is administered in a 4-dose series (given at 2, 4, 6 and 12-15 months). For previously unvaccinated older infants and children, there is a catch-up schedule available.

The pneumococcal conjugate vaccine is one that helps provide protection against invasive pneumococcal disease, a major cause of mortality among infants and young children. Invasive pneumococcal diseases are a group of potentially life-threatening infections caused by the bacterium *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, and include bacterial meningitis, bacteremia, sepsis and bacteremic pneumonia.

Before Prevnar® was available in the United States, *S. pneumoniae* was estimated to be responsible for 25 percent to 40 percent of the cases of bacterial meningitis among children. *S. pneumoniae* can also cause non-invasive illnesses, such as otitis media and pneumonia.

A complete immunization schedule is available in our Technical Assistance and Consultation manuals.

James S. Sinnamon, Director
Division of Child Day Care Licenisng

TRANSITIONING FAMILIES FROM PreK to K - 12
Judy Levine and Jacqueline Wood, Education Consultants
Michigan Department of Education

Transitioning to kindergarten is a big change in the lives of parents and their children. It is an ending of something familiar and a beginning of something more unknown with its own language, culture and procedures. It can be an exhilarating change as well as a frightening experience. For many families, it is perceived as the loss of early childhood—"My baby is all grown up."

The process of transitioning children and their families should occur long before the child moves to kindergarten. We know that children and families adjust better to kindergarten when this occurs. We also know that the adjustment is easier when parents feel comfortable with the change and when schools and early childhood programs work together to reach out to parents.

The key to successful transitions of families lies with the development of trust and positive attitudes between the programs. Therefore, the first step early childhood programs can take is to get to know what elementary schools the children will be attending. In many instances this will mean multiple schools including parochial and charter academies. The early childhood staff need to meet the kindergarten

> **"Remember, kindergarten transition sets the stage for each parent's future engagement in his/her child's education ..."**

teaching staff, principals and other significant people in each of the schools. The development of relationships can often occur more easily if the parties can collaborate on joint events, training or shared resources. At the same time, schools need to recognize that the families attending early childhood programs are their potential customers. It is to their benefit if the children and families transition successfully into their schools.

Parents also need to take a role in the transition process. For them to transition smoothly, they have to recognize their own feelings about the transition. Since this is an ending for them and their child, they may feel sadness as well as excitement. Parents need to say goodbye to the early childhood program while also being allowed to continue to be connected to the early childhood staff, especially if they run into rough times. Parents also need to understand the differences between the early childhood program and the kindergarten programs. This means knowing how to interact in the new environment including communication with staff, expectations for parents, etc. It also includes who to go to, how to reach

STAFFING A SCHOOL- AGE CHILD CARE PROGRAM
Sandy Rademacher, Licensing Consultant
Saginaw County

The growing demand for before/after school care places child care centers, community agencies, and child care home providers on a challenging path to offer quality programming which meets the needs of today's families. Employing qualified staff who believe in the program philosophy and are willing to work within its framework is the beginning of a successful program.

Program directors and home providers play key roles in achieving school-age program missions, goals, and objectives. It is their responsibility to hire, train, and supervise staff. In addition, informal/formal staff evaluation is necessary to maintain and improve the quality of personnel. Finally, recognition of a job well done is imperative to staff retention and the continuity of care for children.

Before selecting staff, develop a job description, which defines the personal and professional qualifications needed for the job. Have clear responsibilities outlined as well as any requirements expected for continuing education or training experiences. During the interviewing of prospective candidates, use a predetermined set of both closed and open-ended questions based on the job description and the responsibilities required.

Choose your personnel carefully. Look for persons who exhibit the following qualities:
- Display strong interpersonal skills
- Enjoy physical activities. Are healthy and energetic
- Knowledgeable of the developmental stages of school-age children
- Enjoy being with children
- Patience to allow children to be independent
- Are a good role model for children
- Have many and varied interests to share with children
- Are sensitive to the uniqueness of each child and family
- Work as <u>team</u> members.

When making personnel decisions try to select a balanced staff of both men and women of differing ages, with diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Select candidates who possess experience in early childhood education, child development, and others with recreational experience.

The primary role and responsibility of staff members in a school-age program is to facilitate children's involvement in a variety of activities including games, clubs, recreation and sports, special projects, and individual enrichment. Staff responsibility entails planning and preparing an environment for children that is interesting, challenging, and appropriately reflects children's current skill levels. Materials and supplies should be accessible to children as they plan and carry out their experiences as individuals or in small/large groups.

Staff must promote children's growing independence by encouraging children to solve their own problems, make and carry out their plans, and become an integral part of the community from within the framework of the program. Positive guidance techniques should be used by staff to help children learn self-control and self-discipline.

Staff must be partners with parents, welcoming their participation in the program. Include parent's ideas in program planning. Share information with them about children's activities, interests, and learning experiences. Communicating with parents through newsletters and program activity calendars is essential in assisting families with planning schedules for out-of-school hours.

Supervision, on-going training and evaluation are necessary on a regular and continuing basis with staff. These practices will ensure that the vision, goals, and objectives of a quality school-age child care program remain effective and are implemented in ways that best serve children and families. ❖

INTERNET SAFETY IN CHILD CARE SETTINGS
Laura Schott, Licensing Consultant
Macomb County

Providers need to be aware of the dangers associated with online use and make sure children are supervised closely. The natural characteristics of children may facilitate victimizations. Children of all ages have a lack of emotional maturity that can make them more susceptible to manipulation or intimidation. They have a strong desire for attention, validation, and affection along with a lack of caution or self-preservation. Children are taught to obey adult requests and demands and may be less likely to know when it isn't appropriate to do so.

Online computer exploration opens up a world of information, opportunity, and possibilities for children to expand their horizons. Children of all ages are flocking to the Internet. Forty-five percent of children in the United States use the Internet with more than 30 million of those younger than 18.

The FBI estimates that 1 out of every 3 children have received an aggressive sexual solicitation online in the past year. Seventy-seven percent of the targets were 14-16 years old and twenty-two percent were children 10-13 years old. These predators are willing to spend considerable amounts of time, money and energy in this process to exploit children. Children can be exposed to inappropriate content on the Internet that includes: nudity or other explicit material; hate group or racist web sites;

promotional material about tobacco, alcohol, or drugs; graphic violence; information on satanic or cult groups; or even recipes for making bombs or other explosives.

Following are some safety tips:
* Post clear, simple, easy to read home/facility rules on or near the computer monitor.
* Utilize safeguarding programs or options your online provider might offer; many offer monitoring or filtering capabilities.
* Instruct children to never give out any personal information online.
* Websites for children are not permitted to request personal information without a parent's permission.
* Keep the computer in an open area of your home/facility.
* Teach children the responsible use of resources online; spend time with the children online and have them teach you about their favorite destinations.
* Talk to the children about not responding to offensive or dangerous email, chat or other communications.
* Talk with them about what to do if they see something that makes them feel scared, uncomfortable or confused.

Following are signs that a child might be at risk online:
* The child spends large amounts of time online, especially at night.
* Pornography is found on the child's computer.
* The child receives phone calls from adults that are not known to the provider or parents.
* The child receives mail, gifts, or packages from someone not known to the provider or parents.
* The child quickly changes the screen on the computer monitor or turns off the monitor when you come in the room.
* The child becomes withdrawn from family and friends.
* The child is using an online account belonging to someone else.

If a child is being victimized by an online predator (i.e., the child has received child pornography; has been sexually solicited or received sexually explicit images from someone who knows the child is under 18 years of age), you should immediately contact your local or state law enforcement agency or National Cyber-tip hotline at 1-877-5CYBER3.

Recommended websites:
- www.NetSmartz.org
- www.playitcybersafe.com
- www.safekids.com
- www.familywatchdog.com - National criminal sexual offender registry
- msn.staysafeonline.com/play.htm
- disney.go.com/surfswell/index.html - Surf Swell Island: Adventures in Internet Safety
- www.wiredkids.org - Internet safety and links to child friendly and other Internet safety sites ❖

Training Requirements

Centers: Caregivers shall complete 12 clock hours of annual training on topics listed below, in addition to CPR, first aid, and blood-borne pathogen training.

Homes: Providers shall complete 10 clock hours of training each year, in addition to CPR and first aid training.

Training topics: Child development, programming, child management and discipline, health and safety, nutrition, working with parents, and licensing rules.

Annual training is assessed by the licensing cycle, not the calendar year.

Centers only: Any training taken from September 2006 will count towards the 2007 training requirement.

1 clock hour of training = 60 minutes.

A RISK TO SCHOOL READINESS?
MEDIA AND ITS IMPACT ON OUR CHILDREN
Jacqueline Wood, Early Childhood Education Consultant
Michigan Department of Education

The programs you watched as a child are very different from what children are watching today. Today's programs are much more violent and graphic than anything you watched as a child.

While the programs in the past may have contained violence, generally the violence was committed by the "bad" guys with the "good" guys working to find ways to resolve the conflict without further violence. The messages that were taught to children and adults included violence is to be avoided and stopped; justice and fairness were the goal; and other ways of solving conflict should be used. The images you saw led your mind to imagine a scene— the music became more intense, a shadowy figure approached, the sounds of violence were followed by a still form. The actual occurrence of the violent act was rarely shown.

Today's scenes and messages are very different. Two thirds of all U.S. TV programming contains violence with 60% of children's programming containing violence. Media images repeatedly show torture, damaged bodies with fuzzied out faces, bombed out cars and markets, blood pools, and "bad" guys attacking for no apparent reason. In the last 24 years, American television has become the most violent television programming in the world. Messages taught to our children indicate that violence is necessary, justifiable, and inevitable. It is fun, exciting, and funny, with the aggressor being rewarded for committing violent acts. The "good" guys now commit as much violence as the "bad" guys. Female characters are now violent.

Commercial messages have also increased greatly since you were young. In the past, we watched one to two commercials every 15 minutes to now four minutes of commercials for every 5 minutes of program content. The 7 to 14 ads children will watch during a four- minute commercial break generally contain violence, directions to go to online websites, encouragement to buy violent toys, and to eat unhealthy foods.

If you listen closely to the ads and the programming, they also have messages to discredit or disregard adults. The following comments are a sampling of the messages given to children during two Saturday mornings on children's TV:
- "It's aliens!! Oh no, it is just adults."
- "For kids only. No adults allowed."
- "No one can help you, not even your Mommy."
- "I didn't raise you to be a whiny coward. You didn't raise me. Mom did."
- "School isn't fun at all. Classes are boring. The halls are crowded. Lunch is awful."

Many of these messages have nothing to do with the story line or the ad's product. Instead they are slipped in as a single statement in the middle of other content.

Media and its effect on today's children is further compounded by the amount of exposure children now have. Children can view TV programming 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Media is also available online and through cell phones and DVDs. Infants now have their own TV network with programming especially designed to capture and hold the attention of babies as young as three months. Thirty percent of all infants and toddlers have a TV in their bedroom. Infants under a year of age can operate the remote control to turn on the TV and change the channels, including during the middle of the night.

So, how much TV are our children watching?
- Infants are now watching media 7-14 hours a week.

> "**EI**" is a symbol that appears on the screen in the corner of the TV. This indicates the program meets the federal criteria for Educational and Informational Programming for children birth to 16 years of age. Each network that broadcasts digitally is to have 3 hours of EI programming a week.

- Toddlers are watching an average of 21 hours a week.
- Preschoolers and schoolage children are watching an average of 28 hours a week.
- Children in poverty often average 49 hours a week.

These amounts do not include the additional time spent watching DVDs and playing video or computer games. By the time children are 6 years old, they will have spent more time watching TV than they will spend talking to their father in their lifetime (DeVore, 1994). Studies have shown that by the time a child finishes 6th grade, he or she will have seen 8,000 murders and a million acts of violence just on children's programming. This does not include what a child sees on adult programming.

Children spend more time watching media than they spend in the school classroom, interacting with adults, playing outside, being read to or reading on their own. Sleeping is the only activity that takes more time. Time with media is time not spent doing all of the things we know are needed for healthy development — playing, running, reading, drawing, imagining and being creative, solving problems and interacting with others.

Parents believe that TV shows are educational and that they help children's learning according to a recent study by the Kaiser Foundation. The American Academy of Pediatrics also recently found that 70% of child care centers use TV on a regular basis with children. While child care homes weren't included in these surveys, chances are strong that TV is also part of the children's day in this type of care, given that media is now such a large part of our culture.

Children do learn from media. The question is, "what they are learning?" We know from surveys that parents and caregivers rarely, if ever, sit and watch TV with children to see what is actually being taught. Instead, TV is used to occupy children's time so the adult can do something else, as a reward or punishment, to calm children, put them to sleep, etc.

Research has repeatedly shown the negative effects of children watching today's media can include:

- Increased meanness and aggressive behavior, including bullying.
- Attention difficulties related to attention deficit and hyper activity.
- Decreased school performance.
- Fewer problem-solving skills.
- Decreased sensitivity and empathy towards others.
- Poor body image.
- Obesity.
- Sleep disturbances.
- Language delay.
- Loss of critical developmental experiences young children need.

Children who are the most vulnerable to media exposure are children under seven years of age, boys, children who live in violent homes and neighborhoods, and children who spend a lot of time with media.

The positive effects of media programming come only from quality educational programming that is watched by the age of child it was designed to reach. Even given that, the research shows developmental gains are primarily in the area of language and vocabulary development. For this to occur the program must have an age-appropriate sequenced curriculum that must be watched with an adult who can expand and explain the content throughout the day.

So what can each of us do to help children in a world full of media?

1. Look at our own use of media with children and in our programs.
2. Talk to families in your care about media and its impact on children.
3. Provide emotional support to parents who are limiting media exposure.
4. Allow no TV/ DVD viewing for children less than 2 years of age.
5. Remove all TV/video viewing from bedrooms.
6. Stop using TV as a babysitter or as background noise.
7. Sit down and watch all programs with the children looking at it from the child's perspective.

THE STATE OF AFTER-SCHOOL CHILD CARE
Lorraine Thoreson, Education Consultant
Michigan Department of Education

"Latchkey", "School-age Care", "School-age Child Care", "Family and Group Home Child Care", "After-school", "Before-school", "Community Education Classes", "Youth Development Programs", "4-H", "Scouts", "Out-of-School Time", "Summer Programs", "Kids Camps", "Recreation Programs", "Home Based Programs", or "Home Alone". There are so many different names to call it and many different models. The common thread is that these are the places our students are spending their time when they are not in school.

Children spend twenty percent of their waking hours in school. How are our children spending the other eighty percent? In Michigan, 450,000 children are home alone after school. Nearly one-third of Michigan's children are left to care for themselves for one to five days per week. Forty-eight percent of Michigan families who do not have after-school care, wish their children could attend after-school programs.[1] What options do families have for their children?

In 2002, a statewide survey was conducted by Michigan State University in response to House Resolution 26 to determine the current status of after-school programs in Michigan. An online capacity survey of over 9000 service providers found:

- *Younger children (ages 5–9) had the most after-school care options available to them and the oldest (ages 14-17) had the fewest.*

- *'Lack of funding' and 'lack of trained staff' were the largest barriers for agencies providing after-school programs for Michigan's youth and 'having enough participants' was of least concern.*

- *Nineteen percent of service providers are private non-profits, forty-five percent are public non-profits, twenty-nine percent are government agencies, and seven percent are for-profits.[2]*

There are a variety of programs that serve a specific purpose and different segments of the student population. The term "Latchkey" dates back to the early 1900's when mothers went to work outside the home as factories sprang up all over the nation. Children who went home alone when school was out wore their house key around their neck. Programs began offering places to keep the children safe while mothers were away. Some of the first public funding for child care came out of the industrial revolution to help families with young children. Soon programs for these students were developed in the schools, often simply called "latchkey programs", later to become "School-age Child Care" or "School-age Care".

Currently most of these programs are funded by the tuition and fees parents pay and supplemented by federal Child Care Reimbursements. Many schools offer these programs through community education or by contracting with community non-profit and for-profit providers. YMCA's, Boys and Girls Clubs, 4-H After-school and other community agencies are using leased or borrowed space in schools to provide services to families in need.

Other types of funding for programming are available from several different sources. The largest amount in Michigan is the federally funded 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) Program. The allocation to Michigan is approximately thirty-one million dollars per year, which supports over 187 sites serving youth in low-income, high-priority schools across the state. These programs focus on academic support and enrichment as well as youth development, recreation and nutrition. The programs are funded for five years and must work to develop community networks and collaborations to sustain the program after the funding ends.

Some school districts or individual school buildings combine funding from several sources like Title I, at-risk funding, PTA, local foundations

and community grants to provide the much needed services for their students. Often it begins with a volunteer teacher or community member offering tutoring or recreational activities after-school and grows to meet the needs of the school.

Several communities in the state have developed other types of programming for after-school, on weekends, and in the summer for children and their families. Many combine existing resources such as PTA, United Way, local businesses, city and county block grants and private funds to meet the needs and the demands from their citizens. One such program is the Bridges to the Future Program of Genesee County. Each participating school district pitches in with resources and receives high-quality programming that might not be available if they were not working together.

Students looking for something to do after-school might choose single-purpose programs such as, recreation programs, scouting, and public or private skills classes (such as dance or karate). Sports programs also play an important role for students during those after-school time hours.

With all of these options available for students after-school, we still have not met the goal of "After-school for All." More funding and more programs will be needed to meet the vision of the Michigan After-School Partnership, "All children and youth will have the opportunity to participate in high-quality after-school programs that support their success through social, cultural, physical, and intellectual development."[3]

The Department of Education is interested in qualified programs because the research shows they make a difference for children. High quality after-school programs should be available to children to enhance their social, emotional, and intellectual well-being. ❖

[1] Afterschool Alliance (2006). *Seven in Ten Voters Want Congress to Increase Afterschool Funding, Poll finds.* Washington, D.C. (www.afterschoolalliance.org).
[2] Michigan After-School Initiative (2003). *The Michigan After-School Initiative Report.* Lansing, MI (www.michigan.gov/21stcclc).
[3] Michigan After-School Partnership (2006). The Facts: After-school, Lansing, MI (www.michigan.gov/masp)

A Risk To School Readiness?
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8. Set a good example and limit our own TV watching.
9. Only allow children to watch "EI" programming and carefully screen the EI programming, as its messages can also be inappropriate for different aged children.
10. Build into children's daily activities that extend the positive messages found in many "EI" programs.
11. Restrict viewing of violent programs, including the news.
12. Talk to children about what they watched and how they feel about it.
13. Resist buying products related to TV programming. Instead, buy toys and other products that allow for more creativity in play.

We all have a responsibility to foster children's development in a positive way. We were once young and the adults in our lives looked out for us. Now it is up to us to lessen the impact of media in our children's lives. ❖

Licensing fees began in 1992 and have not been increased since. This chart shows the new licensing fees that are now in effect.

Facility Type	New Original Fee	New Renewal Fee
Child Care Centers 1-20	$150	$75
Child Care Centers 21-50	$200	$100
Child Care Centers 51-100	$250	$125
Child Care Centers 101+	$300	$150
Group Child Care Homes	$100	$50
Family Child Care Homes	$50	$25

SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE
"The Place to Be!"
Jackie Beitz, SACC Coordinator
Livonia Public Schools

School-Age Child Care (SACC) programs have the opportunity to play a major role in providing a safe, positive, and enriching environment for children before and after their school day.   In order to accomplish this, it is important to have qualified staff that believe in the importance of their work. In addition, procedures that focus on safety should be in place and consistently followed on a daily basis. Finally, the children need a wide variety of individual and group activities that enhance their social, emotional, and intellectual growth.

Of all the necessary components needed for successful before and after school programs, staff tops the list. The qualifications of staff directly impact the quality of the program. Finding individuals that are flexible, creative, and dedicated to their work with children is not always easy. However, finding them lays the foundation for program success. Their overall attitude sets the tone for the environment and determines whether or not a program continues to enrich children's lives.

Children look to their child care staff as role models. Therefore, staff need to   always look, speak, and conduct themselves in a professional manner. It is the caregiver that can balance a professional approach with a down-to-earth personality that wins in the school-age child care setting.

Staff, children, and parents are winners when the environment is safe. I have found the following are great ideas to assist staff in setting up a safe environment:

- Sign in/out sheets must be kept current and reflect each child's contracted attendance schedule.
- Child information cards need to be completed with special needs noted, such as allergies.
- Post the location of the land line phone for emergencies.
- Room location, including the interior room number and the closest exterior door, should be posted near the phone.

- Look over the sign in/out sheet at the end of each session to verify that everyone is gone.
- Develop a binder or file folder which includes the following reference information.
  - Office phone number
  - Director's home phone number
  - AM & PM session schedules
  - Location of:
    - √ Activity plans
    - √ Sign in/out sheets
    - √ Child information cards
    - √ Child contract book
    - √ First aid supplies
    - √ Alternate emergency phone
  - Child allergies/special needs
  - Medication situations
  - Special custody circumstances
  - School rules/handbook
  - Building emergency plans

Activity planning is time well spent. This planning is what separates the professional caregiver from the traditional "babysitter." It is what makes up the "enrichment" part of SACC programs.

Creating a consistent daily schedule is important so that children know what to expect. Appropriate programming should include physical activity each day. Multi-age groups do best when there are opportunities for both individual play and organized games. Depending on the space available and the number of children, staff should plan accordingly. Keep in mind that non-competitive games work best with most children in the lower grades. By third grade, children usually have matured enough to handle a well-structured competitive game. It is important to consider the interests and abilities of the children when planning gross motor activities.

Before and after school is a wonderful time to perfect current skills and spark new interests. The most organized way to do this is to plan a variety of activities each week relating to a specific theme. Most children love to have input into the activities. Tap into this interest; they are the best resource!

Another great resource is networking or brainstorming with other caregivers in your program. Successful school-age child care planning is much like a buffet. It has to have many different activities being "served" at the same time.

Consider distributing a monthly calendar which includes the "theme of the week" and at least one activity relating to it each day. Schedule monthly meetings and team up on calendars. Brainstorming can be both productive and fun!

Fall is a wonderful season for making plans.

- A scarecrow theme is popular this time of year. Include an activity in which the children make scarecrow bowling pins out of 10 2-liter pop bottles. Cover the bottles by dipping torn pieces of old fabric into a pan of glue and placing them on the bottles to dry (like paper Mache'). Form a small head at the top using an old knee-hi and add some yarn for hair. Draw on a face with permanent marker and you have your pins. Any small ball, or even an apple, can be used to bowl.
- During the week, children may also enjoy a "corn cob hunt." Look to local farm markets or grocery stores for donations.
- Try constructing the "World's Largest Paper Bag Scarecrow." This not only involves artistic thought, but science and problem solving skills, as well.

Larger projects can evolve into some of the most memorable times in a program. The following have become yearly traditions in many Livonia SACC programs.

- **Box Town:** Small boxes are decorated and used to make a very large town.
- **SACC City:** Children set up mini-shops and earn "SACC Bucks" to spend by doing random acts of kindness.
- **The SACC Auto Show:** Cars are designed and made by the children using small or large boxes. They write detailed descriptions of their vehicle and all are displayed.
- **The Zoo:** Various animals are selected by small groups who then make their costumes and habitat for zoo visitors (parents and school staff).

I hope that many of these ideas find their way into other programs. I believe in our youth and feel we cannot take for granted the important role we play in so many of their lives. School-Age Child Care is *"The place to be!"* ❖

TEACHING CHILDREN NOT TO BE - OR BE VICTIMS OF - BULLIES
Reprinted from
National Association for the Education of Young Children

Parents and teachers are sometimes reluctant to intervene in conflicts between young children. They don't want to see children harm or ridicule one another, but they want to encourage children to learn how to work out problems for themselves. In such cases, adults have a responsibility to stop violence or aggression in the classroom or at home – both for children who demonstrate harmful behavior and for all other children. We can teach children not to take part in – or become victims of – bullying.

Children who demonstrate aggression, or "bully" other children may be unable to initiate friendly interactions, express their feelings, or ask for what they need. If these children do not improve their social skills, they will continue to have problems relating to peers throughout their lives. In addition, if other children see that aggressors get what they want through bullying, they are more likely to accept or imitate this undesirable behavior.

Young children who are unable to stand up for themselves are easy targets for aggressive playmates. These children inadvertently reward bullies by giving in to them, and risk further victimization. Adults do not help by speaking for victims and solving their problems for them. Children must learn that they have the right to say "No," not only when they are threatened, but in a wide range of everyday situations.

The key to promoting positive interactions among young children is teaching them to assert themselves effectively. Children who express their feelings and needs while respecting those of others will be neither victims nor aggressors. Adults must show children that they have the right to make choices – in which toys they play with, or (within boundaries) what they wear and what they eat. The more children trust and value their own feelings, the more likely they will be to resist peer pressure, to respect warm and caring adults, and to be successful in achieving their personal goals.

How to teach children assertiveness skills:

- Demonstrate assertive behavior (e.g., saying "No" to another child's unacceptable demands) and contrast aggressive or submissive responses through demonstrations. Let children role-play with puppets or dolls.
- Intervene when interactions seem headed for trouble and suggest ways for children to compromise, or to express their feelings in a productive way.
- Teach children to seek help when confronted by the abuse of power (physical abuse, sexual abuse, or other) by other children or adults.
- Remind children to ignore routine teasing by turning their heads or walking away. Not all provocative behavior must be acknowledged.
- Teach children to ask for things directly and respond directly to each other. Friendly suggestions are taken more readily than bossy demands. Teach children to ask nicely, and to respond appropriately to polite requests.
- After a conflict between children, ask those involved to replay the scene. Show children how to resolve problems firmly and fairly,
- Show children how to tell bullies to stop hurtful acts and to stand up for themselves when they are being treated unfairly.
- Encourage children not to give up objects or territory to bullies (e.g., say, "I'm using this toy now"). Preventing bullies from getting what they want will discourage aggressive behavior.
- Identify acts of aggression, bossiness, or discrimination for children and teach them not to accept them (e.g., say, "Girls are allowed to play that, too").
- Show children the rewards of personal achievement through standing up for themselves, rather than depending on the approval of others solely. ❖

Transitioning Families from Pre-K to K-12
Cont. from page 2

teachers and how to seek services. Finally, parents need to feel comfortable in sharing information about their child.

Early childhood programs and schools will also need to consider how they can reach and engage the parents who work two jobs or night shift, cannot read, do not read/speak English, who had poor experiences in the K-12 system, or who have not come to prior events that have been offered.

So what are some successful strategies to take? There are four elements to consider when working towards successful transitions—building bridges between the early childhood program and the kindergarten; parents' role as decision makers; communication to and from parents, and creating physical environments that foster smooth transitions. Here are some ideas you can do to foster successful transitions.

If you are an early childhood program you can:
- Set up a parent good-bye committee to plan an ending celebration. The committee can also visually create formal memories of the early childhood experience and display these memories in the classroom and at home.
- Create a visual record of the ending celebration providing photographs for families to take with them.
- Have last year's parents come back to share elementary school experiences.
- Connect families who are going to the same school/kindergarten classroom.
- Work with parents to complete family and child information sheets to share with the new teacher.
- Create "tip" sheets on how to volunteer, etc. in kindergarten.
- Have a parent education meeting on the importance of parent involvement for future success.
- Provide information throughout the year for parents on concepts they can extend in the home setting.

As parents you can:
- Serve on transition planning committees.

- Plan and take part in ending or welcoming celebrations.
- Survey parents as to the information they wish to know about kindergarten.
- Contact the new school to get the desired information and share with other parents.
- Assess the environment's welcoming tone for families.
- Help arrange for speakers and trips related to kindergarten.
- Set up parent mentor or parent transition support groups.

Successful transitions may or may not mean doing more than you already do. It may involve dropping ineffective approaches and adding more effective ones. Remember, kindergarten transition sets the stage for each parent's future engagement in his/her child's education and this is critical to the child's future achievement in school.   ❖

UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINARS, CLASSES AND OTHER TRAINING OPPORTUNTIES

MiAEYC Infant-Toddler Conference
September21, 2007
Hyatt Regency Dearborn
Dearborn, MI
(800) 336-6424
(517) 336-9700
www.mi-aimh.msu.edu/intro/index.html

18th Annual CCR Early Childhood Conference
Child Care Resources
Kalamazoo Regional 4C
October 27, 2007
Kalamazoo, MI
(800) 343-3470, ext. 228
robin@workfamilysolutions.com
www.workfamilysolutions.com

Community Sharing for Healthy Caring
Livingston County 4C
November 17, 2007
Parker High School
Howell, MI
(517) 548-9112
childcarel@aol.com
heather4c@sbcglobal.net

Michigan Department of Education Early Childhood Conference
January 23-25, 2008
Hyatt Regency Dearborn
Dearborn, MI
(517) 336-9700
conference@MiAEYC.org

MiAEYC Annual Early Childhood Conference
April 10-12, 2008
Amway Grand Plaza Hotel and DeVos Place
Grand Rapids, MI
(800) 336-6424
(517) 336-9700

ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CLASSES

(Call organization for classes, dates, and times)

Michigan 4CAssociation
www.mi4c.org
(517) 351-4171
(800) 950-4171

Michigan State University Extension
www.fcs.msue.msu.edu/bkc/
(517) 432-7654

T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education And Compensation Helps)
www.mi4c.org/teach
(866) MITEACH
(866) 648-3224

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

RESOURCES: BACK TO SCHOOL

Finkelhor, David, Mitchell, Kimberly J. and Wolak, Janis. (2006). <u>Online Victimization of Youth: Five Years Later</u>. Alexandria, Virginia: National Center for Missing & Exploited Children.

<u>More Online, Doing More</u>. (2001). Washington, DC: The Pew Internet & American Life Project.

NetSmartz Workshop…Keeping Kids Safer on the Internet. (2007). Online:<u>www.NetSmartz.org</u>.

The Macomb County Sheriff's Office. Macomb Area Computer Enforcement Task Force (MACE). (2006). <u>Internet Safety Tips</u>.

U. S. Department of Justice. Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2006). <u>A Parent's Guide to Internet Safety.</u>

NAEYC. 1986. Helping children learn self-control. Washington, DC: NAEYC. #572/50.

Slaby, R., W.C. Roedell, D. Arezzo, & K. Hendrix. 1995. Early violence prevention: Tools for teachers of young children. Washington, DC: NAEYC. #325/$7.

Balaban, N., <u>Everyday Goodbyes: Starting School and Early Care – A Guide to the Separation Process,</u> 800-424-2560, <u>www.naeyc.org</u>

Chvojicek, Henthorne, & Larson, <u>Transition Magician for Families: Helping Parents and Children with Everyday Routines,</u> 800-423-8309, <u>www.redleafpress.org</u>

Evans, B., <u>You Can't Come to My Birthday Party!: Conflict Resolution with Young Children,</u> <u>www.redleafpress.org</u>

Levin, D., <u>Remote Control Childhood? Combating the Hazards of Media Culture,</u> 800-424-2560, <u>www.naeyc.org</u>

Levin, D., <u>Teaching Young Children in Violent times: Building a Peaceable Classroom,</u> 800-424-2560, <u>www.naeyc.org</u>

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

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

These recalls have been added since April, 2007:

- Baby Trend Recalls Back Pack Carriers Due to Fall Hazard
- Infantino Recalls Infant Sling Carriers Due to Fall Hazard
- Tri-Star International Recalls Children's Stationery Sets Due to Laceration Hazard
- Discount School Supply Recalls Children's Two-Sided Easels Due to Lead Poisoning Hazard
- Next Step Plastic Sippy/Tumbler Cups Recalled for Laceration Hazard

Details on these product recalls may be obtained on the Consumer Product Safety Commission's website: www.cpsc.gov. To review the complete list, see the Child Care Licensing Division website at: www.michigan.gov/dhslicensing (child care).

STATE OF MICHIGAN
Department of Human Services