

DINIYOTHLI KANOHEDA

(Dee-nee-yoth-lee Kaw-no-head-ah - Children's News)

Volume VII, Issue XII

DECEMBER 2003

GRANDPARENTS—NEARBY, FARAWAY, AND RAISING GRANDCHILDREN

Whether it's "grandma," "granny," "nana," "bubbe," "abuela," or "gramps," "pop-pop," or "g-pa," a grandparent can make a real difference in a child's life. In all ethnicities, cultures, and walks of life, grandparents are the link to a family's culture, history, and traditions. Children fortunate enough to have loving grandparents in their lives have a powerful and emotional bond to nurture and sustain them.

CHANGING ROLES FOR GRANDPARENTS TODAY

The role of grandparent has changed over the years as family structure and the demands of family life have changed. Many families are separated by distance, making it difficult for grandparents to maintain meaningful relationships with their grandchildren. Even when family members live close by, it can still be challenging for grandparents to have quality time with their grandchildren. There are also many blended families today because of remarriages. In these cases, grandparents find themselves seeking to form relationships with step-grandchildren. And every year, the number of grandparents becoming the primary caregivers for their grandchildren increases.

GRANDPARENTS AS PRIMARY CAREGIVERS

For a growing number of American families, grandparenting means more than showering the grandchildren with gifts and goodies and sharing holiday meals. The latest census figures show that 4.5 million children under the age of 18 are being raised in households headed by grandparents.

Findings from The Grandparent Study 2002 Report from AARP:

**4.5 million children under the age of 18 are being raised by households headed by grandparents.*

**About 15% of grandparents provide some level of child care for their grandchildren—up from 8% in 1998.*

**About half the grandparents help pay for their grandchildren's education, while 45% say they assist with living expenses.*

**Almost 70% of surveyed grandparents responding to an AARP survey reported that they see their grandchildren at least once every week or two, and one-quarter spend time with them at least once every few months.*

**The average grandparent spends about \$500 a year on their grandchildren, but two out of five spend between \$500 and \$2,500.*

Continued on page 4-5

**All information from THE DAILY PARENT: A Newsletter for Working Parents. THE DAILY PARENT is prepared by NACCRRRA, Washington, DC, with funding by the Citigroup Foundation.*

SPARKING CONNECTIONS

By Arlene Greenawalt, Grants Program Coordinator
Child Care Resource Center

The Cherokee Nation Child Care Resource Center is announcing a new pilot program for registered (relative) childcare providers called "Sparking Connections". This year-long pilot project will be offered in the five Cherokee Nation Counties with the highest number of registered providers: Adair, Sequoyah, Delaware, Mayes, and Cherokee counties. Sparking Connections is a community based project that will help providers improve quality/school readiness, health and safety, support Cherokee Culture/Language and meet the needs of working families in their community. The pilot project is a year-long study and will be available on two levels:

1. Enhanced Services: Priority will be given to registered providers in the five-targeted counties who have previously received a Grant or been on the Toy Lending Program. Enhanced Services will include a monthly visit to the home and an opportunity to receive a seal for each 25 points they earn in a goal area. Each time a provider earns a seal they can receive a purchase order from our program for up to \$100 in health and safety materials or childcare equipment. Only one seal will be available each three-month period (quarter).

2. Regular Services: Registered providers in the five targeted counties who have contracted with CN Subsidy at least three months will be eligible to participate and earn incentives for child care equipment valued at \$100. Only one seal will be available each three-month period (quarter).

The Sparking Connections Program will also provide an extra \$100 incentive to registered providers who complete all four goals within a year's time. The seals can be spent at the end of each quarter, or saved for a larger purchase at the completion of the program. Emergency Grants of up to \$500 will be made available only to providers who have been on the Sparking Connections Program at least 6 months.

All Registered Providers in Adair, Sequoyah, Delaware, Mayes, and Cherokee Counties will be mailed an invitation letter during the month of December. This letter will outline the goals of the

program. If you wish to participate, it is very important that you respond to the invitation letter

In addition, a Sparking Connections Network Meeting will be held each quarter (every three months) on a Saturday for any registered provider who wishes to attend. Incentive points will be earned for attending. The meeting will be followed with training opportunities such as CPR and First Aid. Cultural and language activities will also be provided during the day.

If you have any questions, please call 458-7613, x234 or toll free 1-888-458-6230, x234. Thank you!

DECEMBER IS:

***Safe Toys and Gifts Month**—The first step in safe toy buying is to carefully examine the toy to see if it is appropriate for the child in question. Use the age label on the package as a guideline, not as an absolute. Second, examine the toy for quality. Check for any small parts or sharp edges. Remember to periodically check all toys for breakage and potential hazards.

***National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month**—"Every 33 minutes, someone will die in an alcohol-related traffic accident" (statefarm.com). Drunk driving is a major child safety issue. Plan a staff/parent awareness meeting. A variety of agencies provide materials or speakers:

~State Farm Public Affairs Department may be able to assist you in arranging for a safety visit from Good Neigh Bear. Call (918) 621-3058.

~Oklahoma Highway Safety Office at 3223 N. Lincoln Blvd. OKC, OK 73105, phone (405) 523-1570.

~Mothers Against Drunk Driving (800) 259-6233.
www.madd.org

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O-SI-YO

by Tina Smith
Resource and Referral Specialist

**Cherokee Nation
Child Care Resource Center
offers extended hours for service!**

The Child Care Resource Center will be open extended hours one Tuesday and one Saturday per month. We encourage parents and child care providers to take advantage of these extended hours. You may want to come by and check-out some curriculum books or borrow a video. We also have a die cut machine and a laminating machine available for your use. Parents may need a child care referral or information on the developmental stages of their children.

Please pass the word about our extended hours.

Saturdays 9:00 am—12:00 pm

- December 13
- January 10
- February 14
- March 13

Tuesdays 5:00 pm—7:00 pm

- December 16
- January 20
- February 17
- March 16



CONGRATULATIONS!!

Christina Kamp

The Cherokee Nation Child Care Resource Center and Friends would like to recognize and applaud Christina Kamp for obtaining her goal of becoming a 3-Star Family Child Care Home! Christina is the first provider in Muskogee county to acquire her 3-Star status. Christina is an active member of GTFCCO (Family Child Care Organization) and has opened her home for a family child care tour to inspire and encourage other providers to participate in the Stars Program and strive to make "Quality Child Care" a top priority for all providers.

Christina understands the importance of providing a wide variety of learning opportunities for the children in her care. She has that wonderful balance between love and structure in her program to promote fun with learning and hands-on exploration. We are proud to have Christina Kamp shedding such a positive light on Family Child Care and we are excited to acknowledge and congratulate her success.

Submitted by Rhonda Dunn

DECEMBER IS...

***Hanukkah December 20-27**

Latkes and Applesauce—A Hanukkah Story

by Fran Manushkin

Inside-Out Grandma: A Hanukkah Story

by Judith Rothenbert

The Chanukkah Guest

by Erick A. Kimmel

***Kwanzaa December 26-31**

It's Kwanzaa Time

by Linda Goss

The Gift of Kwanzaa

by Synthia Saint James

Seven Candles for Kwanzaa

by Anddrea Davis Pinkey

***Christmas Decmeber 25**

The Christmas Blizzard

by Helen Ketteman

Christmas

by Miriam Nerlove

'Twas the Night before Christmas

by Clement C. Moore

Ask families to share appropriate books and/or family experiences with the children.

DINIYOTHLI KANOHEDEA
Child Care Programs



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Publisher—Cherokee Nation
Child Care Resource Center
Editor—Tina Smith

Diniyothli Kanoheda is published through funding from the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Child Care Bureau, the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care and the Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral Association.



Oklahoma Child Care
RESOURCE & REFERRAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

FINDING THE HELP YOU NEED

The first step to accessing help, according to the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), should be to resolve legal questions around custody, guardianship, or adoption. Without legal status, grandparents may not be able to enroll their grandchildren in school or make medical decisions for them.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE If you are raising your grandchildren, check to see if you are eligible for financial assistance from your state. Sources such as Medicaid, foster care, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), or Social Security may be available. If you have private health insurance, inquire about adding your grandchildren to the policy. Your local Department of Social Services, can give you information about eligibility for Medicaid or your state's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

INCOME TAX RELIEF You may be eligible for various federal tax relief programs such as the child tax, health coverage, or earned income tax credits. Tax laws and requirements change every year. It is best to get assistance when filing your taxes to make sure you are getting all the tax relief credits available to you. To find out more about tax reliefs, visit the IRS website at www.irs.gov or visit your local IRS office for help in person.

FINDING CHILD CARE If you need to find child care, call Child Care Aware at 1-800-424-2246, or visit ChildCareAware.org. This service can help you locate your local child care expert—the child care resource and referral (CCR&R) service in your area. The CCR&R will give you information about choosing appropriate child care, along with referrals to child care providers, information on state licensing, and other helpful information you will need in finding good care for your grandchildren.

PAYING FOR CHILD CARE You may be eligible for child care financial assistance or tax relief programs. See Child Care Aware's Finding Help Paying for Child Care brochure, available for free by calling 1-800-424-2246, or visiting the Child Care Aware web site, ChildCareAware.org, for more information.

HELP IN YOUR COMMUNITY Look for resources in your community that can provide emotional support for you as well as your grandchildren. Parenting a grandchild is totally different from parenting your own children. Many of the reasons why children live with their grandparents also create special psychological, educational, and behavioral needs. The children may be grieving or angry and confused by their parents' absence. You may also be dealing with your own grief or anger and disappointment at your child's inability to raise his/her own children. Seek out help—from your faith community, your grandchild's school, local support agencies, or individual counselors. You are not alone.

GRANDPARENTING AT A DISTANCE

For many families, “over-the-meadow and through-the-woods” is now “over-the-phone and through-the-mail or Internet”. Even at a distance, though, you can develop a rewarding relationship with your grandchildren. Here are some ways to stay in touch.

- ☺ Call your grandchildren regularly, on the same day, same time, so they become familiar with your voice.
- ☺ Send a photo of yourself.
- ☺ Tape yourself (audio or video) reading stories or singing songs.
- ☺ Write letters, include articles or drawings.
- ☺ Send e-mails to older grandchildren. Choose a time to be on the computer at the same time and send instant messages.
- ☺ Ask your grandchildren to mail or fax their drawings, schoolwork, letters or projects.
- ☺ Put together a scrapbook or photo album of people, places, things from your past or that interest you and send it to your grandchildren as a keepsake.
- ☺ Ask and take an interest in your grandchildren's interests and hobbies.
- ☺ Send tokens from places that you visit or have visited.
- ☺ Arrange to see your grandchildren either on holidays or special visits whenever possible.

GRANDPARENTING CLOSE BY

Even if your family lives close by, work schedules, school, and other activities can still make spending quality time with your grandchildren a challenge. Planning ahead of time can help. Here are some ways to stay in touch close by:

- *Arrange regular visits with your family: Sunday dinners, picnics, barbeques.
- *Volunteer at your grandchildren's child care center or in their classroom.
- *Attend grandchildren's sporting or extracurricular activities on a regular basis.
- *Spend alone time with each grandchild you have: go to a movie, take a walk, go to the park, ride a bike, cook a meal together.
- *Talk to your grandchildren about what they like to do, things they are interested in.
- *Plant a garden together and take care of it together.
- *Put together a family tree or family history together and share it with the entire family.

VISITS WITH THE GRANDCHILDREN

Try to schedule regular visits with your grandchildren, either at their home or yours. If the visit is at your home, and there are young grandchildren, make sure your home is safe according to current safety standards. Babyproof your home when necessary. There are many internet resources on baby proofing the home (www.ivillage.com/topics/parents), but the main idea is to remove or make safe all items that can be pulled, pushed, swallowed, broken, or tripped over. You also may want to have first aid items on hand and any other supplies that are necessary.

Each time grandchildren visit, take a family photograph in the same spot (perhaps by a favorite tree in your yard). In years to come, you'll have a wonderful record of your family's growth—and the tree's growth, too. Don't forget to send copy of picture when developed.

10 CHILDPROOFING TIPS

*1. Place pills, household products out of reach. *2. Cover electrical outlets. *3. Lock cabinets or drawers. *4. Stabilize furniture so it can't tip over. *5. Put rubber stoppers at top of doors. *6. Remove all small objects from the floor. *7. Get rid of dangling cords on blinds, curtains and other items. *8. For infants and toddlers, put baby gate at top of stairs. *9. Remove small rugs or other items that can be tripped over. *10. Put houseplants out of reach.

STEP-GRANDPARENTING

Yours may be one of many families in which there are both grandchildren and step-grandchildren. The blending of families can be a complicated and stressful process for everyone involved. Because relationships are developed over time, it may take several years for step families to become a solid family unit.

As a grandparent, you will want to consider how you will be involved in this new family unit. There are definitely special considerations. Become involved right away. As soon as you know that there will be step children, talk to your family about how they will handle the new family situation. Let them know you want to be a part of the process and also get to know the step children. Become involved in the family discussions and be introduced to the step children as soon as possible. You will always want to follow and respect the decisions your children make.

Take the time to talk with and get to know your step-grandchildren. Plan activities and share your interests with them just as you do with your grandchildren. Get to know them as individuals. Let them know that you are there for them. Creating a role that is comfortable for you is essential for a rewarding stepfamily life. This will take time, patience, and listening.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES—INTERNET / TELEPHONE

*AARP Grandparent Information Center (GIC) (1-800-434-3410) www.aarp.org/grandparents (Web site has resources by state, information sharing, general support). Some resources in Spanish.

*GrandsPlace www.grandsplace.com (State resources, legal information, chat rooms, area for children)

*Grand Parent Again www.grandparentagain.com (State support groups, helpful articles)

*Generations United (202-638-1263) www.gu.org/projg&o.htm (State resources, support groups, various other resources)

*Eldercare Locator (1-800-677-1116) www.eldercare.gov (Link to State Area Agencies on Aging which can provide local resources to help seniors who provide care for children under age 18)

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES—BOOKS

**The Essential Grandparent: A Guide*, Lillian Carson

**Raising Our Children's Children*, Deborah Doucette-Dudman

**Grandparents as Parents: A Survival Guide for Raising a Second Family*, Sylvie De Toledo

**Robert Lives With His Grandparents*, Martha Whitmore Hickman

**To Grandma's House We...Stay: When You Have to Stop Spoiling Your Grandchildren and Start Raising Them*, Sally Houtman

**Totally Cool Grandparenting: A Practical Handbook*, Leslie Linsley

*All information from *THE DAILY PARENT: A Newsletter for Working Parents*. *THE DAILY PARENT* is prepared by NACCRRRA, Washington, DC, with funding by the Citigroup Foundation.

DECEMBER TRAINING

Contact the Resource Center at (918) 458-7613 or 1-888-458-6230 to register for classes listed below (unless otherwise stated).

December 1,4,8 & 11 VINITA—CHRISTIAN CHILD CARE 2 Time: 6:00 pm—8:30 pm
Movement Experiences—A methods class on how to provide movement experiences in a daily program for young children. Includes classroom learning activity cards.

December 1,3,5,8,10,12,15, & 17 TAHLEQUAH—CCRC Time: 1:00 pm—5:00 pm
 December 17: 1:00 pm—3:00 pm

So You're Caring for School-Age Kids—Training for experienced family child care providers on how to create a program for school-age children within the family child care setting. Participants will learn set up for school-age care, working with parents & schools, and working with school-agers from different age groups. The result will be enhanced professionalism of school-age care providers, and improved quality of care for school-age children.

December 2,4,9 & 11 PRYOR—MAYES CO. DHS Time: 6:00 pm—9:30 pm
Dollars and Sense—A child care business skills training class focusing on family child care homes. Learn better business practices such as developing a business plan, record keeping, policies, parent contracts, setting realistic prices and marketing. Reviews communication skills with exercises on assertiveness, communicating with parents, presenting yourself as a small business owner and listening skills. (Fee: \$25 which includes Dollars and Sense workbook.)

December 2,4,9 & 11 MUSKOGEE—MRMC Time: 6:00 pm—8:30 pm
Behavior and Guidance I - Suggests ways to encourage positive behavior. Considers caregiver's skills as key to good discipline. Suggests ways to handle difficult situations and explains the differences in typical and severe problem behaviors. **Contact Sherry Grooms, MRMC, at (918) 684-2448 to register.**

December 2,4,9,11 & 16 CLAREMORE—HOMESPUN DAYCARE Time: 6:00 pm—10:00 pm
ELCCT (Entry Level Child Care Training) - Introduction to child care training. The course provides new and/or future child care professionals with knowledge needed to provide quality care for young children while helping each individual child develop to his or her full potential. The course contains information and learning activities that stress the importance of the caregiver and child care work. Cost: \$20. To register contact CECPD at www.cecpd.org or 1-888-446-7608.

December 4 TAHLEQUAH—CCRC Time: 9:00 am or 2:00 pm
Food Handler Class—Provides information on handling and serving food in child care settings.

December 4 TAHLEQUAH—CCRC Time: 6:00 pm—10:00 pm
Leading the Change: Family Friendly Programs—Training for centers on improving responsiveness to the needs of working families. Participants learn how to implement a Family Friendly audit tool. Participants will learn how to implement changes to become more family friendly. Participants will learn strategies to create flexible schedules, additional schedules, additional services, and promote increased parent involvement.

December 9 & 11 TAHLEQUAH—CCRC Time: 6:00 pm—9:00 pm
Global Games—Participants will learn activities to use with children which help children learn about cultural difference and explore different games, foods, crafts, songs, drama, etc. from around the world. Participants and the children they care for will gain increased cultural awareness and appreciation, and a heightened sense of global awareness.

December 18 MIAMI—M&M KIDS Time: 6:00 pm—7:30 pm
Music—How to incorporate music into the early childhood classroom setting.
 and
Language—How to incorporate language into the early childhood classroom setting. 7:30 pm—9:00 pm

JANUARY TRAINING

Contact the Resource Center at (918) 458-7613 or 1-888-458-6230
to register for classes listed below.

January 8,12,15,19 & 22 TAHLEQUAH—EARLY CHILDHOOD UNIT TRAINING ROOM Time:6:00-10:00 pm
ELCCT (Entry Level Child Care Training) - Introduction to child care training. The course provides new and/or future child care professionals with knowledge needed to provide quality care for young children while helping each individual child develop to his or her full potential. The course contains information and learning activities that stress the importance of the caregiver and child care work. Cost: \$20. To register contact CECPD at www.cecpd.org or 1-888-446-7608.

January 12,13,17,19 & 20 MULDROW—MULDROW DAY CARE CENTER Time: 6:00 pm—9:00 pm
January 17: 8:00 am—5:00 pm
ELCCT (Entry Level Child Care Training) - Introduction to child care training. The course provides new and/or future child care professionals with knowledge needed to provide quality care for young children while helping each individual child develop to his or her full potential. The course contains information and learning activities that stress the importance of the caregiver and child care work. Cost: \$20. To register contact CECPD at www.cecpd.org or 1-888-446-7608.

January 12,15,19,22 & 26 VINITA—CHRISTIAN CHILD CARE 2 Time: 6:00 pm—10:00 pm
ELCCT (Entry Level Child Care Training) - Introduction to child care training. The course provides new and/or future child care professionals with knowledge needed to provide quality care for young children while helping each individual child develop to his or her full potential. The course contains information and learning activities that stress the importance of the caregiver and child care work. Cost: \$20. To register contact CECPD at www.cecpd.org or 1-888-446-7608.

January 13,15,20 & 22 TAHLEQUAH—CCRC Time: 6:00 pm—8:30 pm
Language—A methods class introducing and promoting language skills for infants through young children.

January 22 (beginning date) SALLISAW—SALLISAW CIVIC CENTER
ELCCT (Entry Level Child Care Training) - Introduction to child care training. The course provides new and/or future child care professionals with knowledge needed to provide quality care for young children while helping each individual child develop to his or her full potential. The course contains information and learning activities that stress the importance of the caregiver and child care work. Cost: \$20. To register contact CECPD at www.cecpd.org or 1-888-446-7608.

Location Information

- *The Cherokee Nation Child Care Resource Center is located in the James Danielson Children's Village in Tahlequah.
- *Christian Child Care 2 is located at 616 W. Delaware in Vinita.
- *The Early Childhood Unit-Tahlequah is located in the James Danielson Children's Village in Tahlequah.
- *Homespun Daycare is located at 305 S. Chickasaw in Claremore.
- *Mayes County DHS is located at 501 S. Elliott in Pryor.
- *M & M Kids is located at 215 BJ Tunnel Blvd. in Miami.
- *Muldrow Day Care Center is located at 501 S. Main in Muldrow.
- *Muskogee Regional Medical Center (MRMC) is located at 300 Rockefeller.

Cherokee Nation facilitates training by recruiting educators employed by other agencies.
Ideas and practices presented are not necessarily endorsed
by the Cherokee Nation Child Care Resource Center.



CPR AND FIRST AID TRAINING

December 2	Tahlequah—EMS Pediatric CPR	Time: 6:00 pm—10:00 pm
December 9	Muldrow—Stepping Stones Pediatric CPR	Time: 6:00 pm—10:00 pm

Cherokee Nation EMS began a new cost and payment policy on April 1, 2003.
Pediatric CPR is \$20.00 and First Aid is \$25.00. **(FEE IS NON-REFUNDABLE)**

Pre-payment is required and must be received

at Cherokee Nation EMS 5 days prior to the date of the scheduled training.

A minimum of 8 participants must be registered for the training to be held.

Make payment to Cherokee Nation EMS and mail payment and registration form to:

Cherokee Nation EMS

Attn: Jimmy Summerlin

22114 South Bald Hill Road

Tahlequah, OK 74464

If you have any questions, please contact Jimmy Summerlin at EMS at (918) 458-5403

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THE FOLLOWING REGISTRATION FORM :

CHEROKEE NATION EMS TRAINING PROGRAM REGISTRATION FORM

Please Print

Date: _____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

What county do you live in? _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Date of Training: _____

Type of Class: _____

Organization / Workplace: _____

Ethnic Descent: Cherokee Native American _____ Other Native American: _____
Other Descent _____

COPING WITH THE HOLIDAYS

By Mary Ucci

December is a month filled with holidays—including Christmas, Chanukah, and Kwanzaa. These holidays have in common a sense of joy and excitement, and as adults we want to share these feelings with our children. In our enthusiasm, however, we have to be careful to recognize that children view the holidays differently from adults. First, the activities surrounding the holidays can simply overwhelm a child. Their meal schedule is different, the foods they eat are different, there are many visits from family and friends, parties to attend, and in general the pace is much faster than any other time of the year. Second, since adults are caught up in these activities, they may not focus their usual levels of attention on their children's emotional needs.

With this in mind, we should consider thoughtful and sensitive ways to bring the spirit and excitement of the holidays into the classroom or child care setting. Whether the children are cared for in a nondenominational or religious environment, it's important to consider that very young children (ages 3 to 5) aren't terribly capable of anticipating the holidays; for them, the holidays mean something when they happen. Further, it takes several years for them to develop the sense of tradition that we adults take for granted.

So what can be done in the classroom that will provide a sense of joy, without being overwhelming? First, it's useful to find out what holidays are represented by children of different religions in the classroom, and to learn what's going on in their homes in relation to the holidays. The challenge is to discover what's really meaningful to the children in our care, as this information will guide what we do for a given group of children.

With all the excitement going on, I like to make the classroom a place where the holidays are acknowledged, but children can still find the comfort and security of their usual routines and surroundings. For this reason, I try to include symbols of the various holidays without having decorations that take over the classroom. In addition to the symbols, children do well relating to scenes of people gathering for the holidays; these scenes can add to the decorations and at the same time can be used to discuss what holidays mean to children. Projects can follow the same theme of recognizing the holidays without being overwhelming—for example, children can make and decorate cookies, read stories and have art activities that reflect the joy of the holidays.

The bottom line is for us to recognize that holidays can be a time of great stress for children, as they can be for adults, and it's important to keep classroom (and home) routines stable and predictable. By being mindful of young children's perspectives, we can share the joy of the season in a way that is appropriate to their developmental level.

"Reprinted from CHILD HEALTH ALERT, P.O. Box 610228, Newton Highlands, MA 02461."

WISH LIST

Have you ever thought about making a wish list for your center or family child care home? This 'wish list' does not have to be just for Christmas. Keep it posted and make changes to it throughout the year. There may be times a parent would like to purchase something for your facility, classroom or home...but does not have the time to stop and ask what is needed. Having a 'wish list' available and visible makes it a little more convenient for parents. Besides, just how many bottles of lotion, bars of soap and scented candles can you really use anyway?

Ideas for your wish list:

*Infants—activity quilts, bath toys, cloth books, soft dolls, squeaky toys, textured teethers, tracking toys (eyes follow movement)

*Toddlers—bath toys, books, fit-together toys, push-and-pull toys, pounding toys, shape toys, soft toys, stacking and nesting toys

*Threes—art supplies (non-toxic), blocks, books, building toys, CD's, cars, dolls, dress up clothes, outside toys (slide, swing), pretend food, simple puzzles

*Fours—art supplies (non-toxic), blocks, books, books with puppets, building sets, dollhouse, memory games, musical instruments, outside toys, pretend toys

*Fives—art material and kits, beginning science sets, cars, easy reader books, games, musical instruments, puppets, puzzles, table and chairs

*Six and Up—arts and craft materials, board games, books, dollhouse and furniture, Lego's, outside equipment (balls, jump ropes, sports equipment), science kits

If you work with older children you might request things such as: educational software, *Geo-Safari*, microscopes, and table games.

Ideas from *The Apple Tree* newsletter and National SAFE KIDS website www.safekids.org

POINTERS FOR PROVIDERS

By Leah Duncan, Manager
Child Care Services, Subsidy Program

As we are quickly approaching the holiday season I would like to remind each of you that during the holiday season it is necessary for deadlines for check disbursements to change due to the Holidays or any events in which Cherokee Nation offices may be closed. The deadlines are established by the Cherokee Nation Accounting Department. The dates listed below are subject to change without notice. At this time, I am anticipating that due to the Christmas Holiday the tentative deadline will be Monday, December 15, 2003 at 12:00 p.m. I anticipate standard deadlines will resume soon after the New Year Holiday. Please keep in mind that despite the deadlines, Child Care Subsidy Staff will continue to work diligently to process all billing documents received in order to meet the deadlines. However, there is no guarantee that billing documents received after the deadline will be processed to receive a check within the Holiday check disbursement schedule.

Keep in mind that billing documents should not be turned in before the expiration dates. Any billing documents received in advance of their expiration dates will be returned to you unless documentation is attached stating that your facility will be closed for the remaining days of the contract or that you will not be charging for the remaining days of the contract. Retro forms will not be issued for any dates that you fail to bill.

Remember:

- Cherokee Nation does not pay for any days that you are closed.
- Cherokee Nation does not pay for Holidays unless the child we are being billed for is in attendance on the Holiday being addressed and the parents' work or school schedules justify the child's attendance.
- The Cherokee Nation Child Care Services School Closing Policy (listed on next page) must be adhered to in order to receive payment.
- All billing forms must include a batch form to be processed. Billing forms received that do not contain a batch form will be returned.
- Billing forms completed in pencil will not be processed. They will be returned to be completed in ink.
- Pink copies of batch forms and billing forms should be kept for your personal records.
- All billing forms must be received within 90 days of the listed expiration date to be considered for payment. All billing forms are void 90 days from the expiration date listed on the billing form.
- At no time should a parent ever be requested or allowed to sign a blank or incomplete billing form. This is a violation of your Cherokee Nation Licensing Contract.
- Only persons listed on the tentative decisions have authority to sign the billing forms.

If you have any questions or if we can be of further assistance to you please call us at (918) 458-4444 or toll-free at 1-888-458-6230.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS...

from us to you!!



**CHILD CARE PROGRAM
BILLING PROCEDURES - SCHOOL CLOSINGS
EFFECTIVE 10-01-98**

OFFICIAL POLICY:

Changes in the hours of care may be authorized with no pre-approval for additional hours of child care needed due to school closings. Additional hours of care may be authorized in half-day increments only. All changes in hours of care, which are not related to school closing, i.e. a change in parents' work or school schedule, must have prior authorization by a Child Care Eligibility Specialist.

School closings include: Spring Break, Teachers Meetings, Staff Development Days, Winter (Christmas) Break, Snow Days, Official Holidays (Thanksgiving, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Easter, etc.) Times will vary by school, therefore, the Child Care Program has not set any specific days nor will we ask the parent to submit a child's school schedule. The Child Care Program retains the right to require documentation if needed. The Parent/Guardian **does not** have to call the Child Care Eligibility Specialist for school closings unless additional days are required for a child; (i.e. A child is approved for 3 part-time days and will need to attend 5 full-time days during Spring Break. The Parent/Guardian will be required to contact a Child Care Eligibility Specialist before an approval to claim the additional days can be made.) Providers will not have to wait for Retro Forms to be issued for school closings. The current contract can be utilized. This will result in a more timely and efficient level of service to providers and parents of the Child Care Programs.

Changes in parents' work schedules, school changes, additional days of care, or residences still require verification be provided to the Child Care Eligibility Specialist. The Full-Time rate will not begin until verification of the change is received by the Child Care Office. Providers can utilize the current contract. If timely notice is received by the Child Care Office, payment for the Full-Time charge will be paid. Parents will be responsible for any unauthorized care. **Parents are required to notify the Child Care Eligibility Specialist when school is out for the summer vacation.**

In order to claim for school closings, these procedures shall be adhered to:

1. Providers must write in the time the child arrived, the time the child departed, the number of hours the child was there, and the amount charged for that day. (This amount is based on your established rates for Full-Time Care for the children in your facility.)
2. The reason for claiming Full-Time Care on a Part-Time billing form must be documented for each day of additional care on the contract or voucher. You must list the reason: Spring Break, Teachers Meeting, etc. beside each day you expect Full-Time payment for. Failure to properly document the reason for additional time will result in a denial of the Full-Time rate and payment of the Part-Time rate. For vouchers, mark out the AMOUNT CLAIMED, add the difference from the Part-Time to the Full-Time rate to the AMOUNT on the voucher. This is the amount you will claim for each voucher in which you can claim additional Full-Time rates. Additional Retro Forms **will not** be authorized for failure to properly document the additional Full-Time hours of care.
3. When a child has used all days within the expiration dated on the contract, the provider will total the full- and part-time days, record the number of days, the total charge of this contract, and deduct the parents co-payment. For vouchers, the provider will add up the total amount of the vouchers and submit for payment. (Reminder: The co-payment has been deducted for the voucher. The provider is responsible for collecting the difference in the amount between the voucher and the amount charged.)
4. All other current payment policy and procedures remain in effect.



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