



May, 2011

#### Inside This Issue

- 1 [Message from the Co-Chair](#)
- 1 [Upcoming Events](#)
- 2-3 [Events](#)
- 4 -6 [Resources](#)
- 7 [Committee Meetings](#)
- 7 [EIC Meeting Schedule](#)

## Message from the Co-Chair

It looks like Spring is finally around the corner. The trees and flowers are blooming and we can all finally get outside to enjoy the warmer weather.

The Winter Family Story night brought out lots of families in February. The children loved listening to Floyd Stokes (Super Reader) read the story [The Mitten](#). Floyd also enthusiastically read a few of his own books to the delight of the children. Everyone rocked and sang to the happening lyrics. Crafts and snacks were enjoyed by all. It was a hopping literacy evening full of networking, socializing, and lively fun activities!

Merle Crawford, OT, presented on Sleep in April. About 25 families participated in learning about sleep; how to get their children in bed, stay in bed and sleep through the night. Families left with lots of strategies in their pockets to try out at home. Thanks Merle, we are all looking forward to some extra sleep in the next few months!

In this newsletter you will find information about upcoming events and meetings. We hope that you will come out and support the efforts of our Early Intervention community.

Should you have any questions or need further information, please contact Ann Timashenka, Professional Co-Chair at 717-732-8400, ext. 8537, [atimashe@caiu.org](mailto:atimashe@caiu.org).

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#### *Next EIC Meeting-*

*July 21, 2011*

*10-12:00 pm*

*CAIU*

*55 Miller St.*

*Enola, PA*

*17025-1640*

*(717) 732-8400, X8537*

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## Upcoming Events

Make sure you have the following EIC events on your calendar!

### **Family Carnival**

June 23, 2011 from 5:00-8:00 at the Adventure Zone Playground in Mechanicsburg

### **EIC General Membership Meeting**

July 21, 2011 from 10:00-12:00 am at the CAIU in Enola

## Events

Please join us!

### Community Forum:

“Healthy Lifestyles for Children with Disabilities”

**Date:** May 3, 2011

**Time:** 6-6:30pm light meal / 6:30-8:00pm program

**Location:** Giant Community Center,  
2300 Linglestown Rd, Harrisburg PA 17110

**RSVP:** Monica Lazur by Monday April 25, 2011  
717-975-0611  
mlazur@ucpcentralpa.org

**This is your chance—Tell us what you think!**  
***Survey of Community Concerns to follow  
light meal***

**Participating Partners:**

- \* UCP Central PA
- \* Capital Area Intermediate Unit
- \* The Arc of Cumberland and Perry Counties
- \* The Arc of Dauphin and Lebanon Counties
- \* MH/MR Programs of Dauphin County and Cumberland-Perry Counties
- \* Temple University Center for Obesity Research and Education





Family Carnival  
Thursday  
June 23, 2011  
5:00-8:00 pm

Adventure Zone Playground  
1775 Lambs Gap Road  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050



There will be games, great food and FUN! We encourage you to bring blankets or chairs for extra seating.

**RAIN OR SHINE!**



This event is **free** and open to families of children involved in early intervention services 0-5 years of age in Dauphin, Cumberland, and Perry counties.

RSVP to Lauren Mahoney at 732-8400 X 8379  
Or at [lmahoney@caiu.org](mailto:lmahoney@caiu.org) by Friday, June 17, 2011

Sponsored by Early Childhood Connections

**Resources**

# CELL – [www.earlyliteracylearning.org](http://www.earlyliteracylearning.org)

The goal of the Center for Early Literacy Learning (CELL) is to promote the adoption and sustained use of evidence-based early literacy learning practices. This site has resources for early childhood intervention practitioners, parents, and other caregivers of children, birth to five years of age, with identified disabilities, developmental delays, and those at-risk for poor outcomes.

Literacy Learning Experiences - These practices show you how everyday home and community activities encourage infants to listen, talk, and learn the building blocks for early literacy.

*Especially for parents of infants!*

## Homespun Fun

*Literacy Learning Experiences*

Everyday family life is filled with moments that will spark your baby's interest in talking, reading, and writing. Make your home a place where he can learn the joys of books, stories, and talking!

### What is the practice?

Looking at books. Scribbling and drawing. Fingerplays. Sound and word games. These kinds of things help babies learn to read, write, and talk. We call these different kinds of activities *literacy-rich home experiences*.

### What does the practice look like?

An infant snuggles in an adult's lap as they look at a picture book. An infant and parent laugh as they play peek-a-boo. An infant in a highchair at the dinner table listens to her older brothers chat about their day at school. An infant uses his finger to draw in a puddle of pudding or yogurt. These are just a few of the literacy-rich experiences that babies like and enjoy.



### How do you do the practice?

Babies benefit from experiences that create interest in reading, talking, and writing. These should be activities that your child finds fun and interesting. But don't overdo it! A few highly interesting activities are better than too many not-so-interesting things to do.

- Picture books. ABC books. Talking books. Photo-album books. These are all great bets for building a baby's interest in stories.
- Read to your baby any time she seems interested. Find favorite books and let her touch, point, show, and babble as you share them together.
- Play lap games and fingerplays together. Sing nursery rhymes and made-up songs with your child.
- Talk to your child while you are changing his diaper or cooking meals. Include your child when talking with others. Ask simple questions like "What do you think about that?" It isn't important for your child to understand what is being said. The important thing is making your child part of the activity.
- Let your child try finger drawing with pudding or yogurt. Involve your child in activities like watching you make a shopping list or write a note or letter.
- Encourage your child to play with alphabet toys that make sounds when shaken or dropped.

### How do you know the practice worked?

- Does your child try to talk to you with sounds or hand motions?
- Does your child know the words that "come next" in a story or nursery rhyme?
- Does your child show interest in trying to draw with his or her fingers?

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*Especially for parents of toddlers!*

## Books and Crayons of One's Own

*Literacy Learning Experiences*

Looking at and reading books is fun. Using crayons and other writing materials is fun. These activities also help toddlers build literacy skills they will use throughout their lives. In this guide you'll find ideas for fun ways to enrich your child's home life with everyday literacy learning.

### What is the practice?

You can give your toddler a head start on literacy well before formal schooling begins. Having a supply of books, magazines, catalogs, art materials, and music in the home is great. With these supplies, you can provide a world of ways to have fun while learning.



### What does the practice look like?

Parents can arrange their homes in many ways that invite literacy play. For example, you could give your toddler his own supply of crayons, markers, pencils, paints, stamps, and paper. Store them at a small desk or table kept just for his use. Fill a low shelf or box with children's books and magazines. Update these supplies from time to time by adding new items based on your child's growing and changing interests.

### How do you do the practice?

It doesn't have to be hard or costly to provide a literacy-rich home for your toddler. Use recycled supplies (catalogs, magazines, newspaper inserts) or buy them cheaply at garage sales, thrift stores, and used-book shops.

- Find materials that match your child's own interests. One toddler might be charmed by bright, sparkly markers. Another might love using a notepad decorated with cartoon characters. Stickers and stamps might inspire still another toddler to decorate paper and "write" or "draw" on it.
- Let your child help choose a special place in the house for his "desk" and materials. It could be just one shelf in a bookcase or one end of a playroom table. Having his own space helps a toddler become more actively engaged in early literacy activities. When you're ready to share a story, he can choose a book from the box or shelf himself.
- Show excitement when your child writes, draws, and looks at books. Ask questions and praise his efforts. Suggest projects to do together. Pair up to write letters to family members, paint pictures for birthday gifts, or read a book while supper cooks.
- Help your toddler try out computer programs designed for his age group. Let him keep game disks in a special drawer or case. You can sit with your child and guide him through the beginning stages of a game. Let him take over little by little as his skills grow.
- Your toddler's literacy play won't look much like grown-up reading, writing, or drawing. He may page through books from back to front or hold them upside down. Much of his drawing may still be scribbling. Don't worry! His eager involvement in the activities builds his interest and paves the way for learning more mature skills.

### How do you know the practice worked?

- Does your child know where to find his literacy play materials and go get them on his own?
- Does your child enjoy looking at books, using art materials, and playing computer games with you?
- Does your child point out similar materials he would like to play with when he sees them?

**CELL** Center for Early Literacy Learning  
CENTER FOR EARLY LITERACY LEARNING

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*Especially for parents of preschoolers!*

## Adventure in a Box

*Literacy Learning Experiences*

Have fun creating a special writing box with your preschooler! A box filled with inspiring writing materials can help your budding writer build confidence and skills.

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### What is the practice?

Writing becomes a special event for children ages 3-5 when they make their own writing boxes. With a writing box, a young child begins to see himself as a writer—one with good ideas to express and all the tools needed to express them. Homemade writing boxes keep writing materials in one place, close at hand, for whenever your child gets the writing spark.

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### What does the practice look like?

Fill a box with many materials that your preschool child can use to draw, write, and create. Place the writing box somewhere in your home where your child can reach it easily. The box should hold writing tools that interest your child and motivate her to write. For example, have markers or pencils in her favorite colors, or a note pad in the shape of her favorite animal.



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### How do you do the practice?

Start with an ordinary cardboard box, large enough to hold papers and writing tools. Help your child cover it in whatever way pleases her. Some easy choices are gift wrap, craft paper, plastic shelf liner, or magazine pages.

- After covering the box, encourage your child to decorate it. She can use stickers, stamps, drawings, or whatever else she wants. Fill the box with lots of writing materials. Include small packs of crayons, wide lined paper, construction paper, pencils, small notebooks, washable markers, and erasable colored pencils. Add envelopes, a roll of tape, and bright stickers to make pre-writing and writing even more fun.
- Use small sets of pencils, markers, crayons, and paper so that making choices and cleaning up are easier.
- Crayons that don't roll, extra-thick pencils and markers, and child-sized scissors with rounded points work well for preschoolers who are developing fine-motor control.
- Encourage your child to use the box for writing letters to grandparents. She can also use it to make lists and to draw and create stories for you to read together.

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### How do you know the practice worked?

- Does your child spend time using the materials in the writing box?
- Does she show you books, cards, papers, and other writings that she has created?
- Has your child shown interest in trying to write with different tools?
- Is she exploring new uses for writing?

**CELL** Practices  
CENTER for EARLY LITERACY LEARNING

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**2011-12 EIC  
Meeting Schedule;  
July 21, 2011**

CAIU

Keystone Room

**October 20, 2011**

CAIU

Dogwood/Hemlock  
Room

**January 19, 2012**

CAIU

Keystone Room

**April 19, 2012**

CAIU

Keystone Room

*(All meetings are held  
from 10-12:00 pm)*

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**SICC Calendar (2010-11)**

(12:00-3:00 at PATTAN in  
Harrisburg)  
June 2

You can now reach us on  
**FACEBOOK;**  
**Early Intervention  
Connections**

*Parental and professional  
involvement is essential. Our  
community is diverse and we  
need the input and support of  
many to provide quality  
services to young children  
with disabilities and delays  
and their families.*

## Committee Meetings

The following committees meet periodically throughout the year to support the mission of the EIC and provide quality early intervention services to children and families. If you would like to join one of the committees or want more information, please contact one of the committees chairs listed below. We look forward to you joining our team!

### Membership Committee

Chair- Cheryl Gundrum- 780-7048 or [cgundrum@dauphinc.org](mailto:cgundrum@dauphinc.org)  
*(Responsible for recruitment of members and planning for EIC meetings. This group also collaborates with other committees to disseminate information important to the early learning community, as well as upcoming events, workshops and celebrations.)*

### Family Outreach Group

Chair- Amy Reed - 240-6320 or [areed@ccpa.net](mailto:areed@ccpa.net)  
*(Will look at ways to include and engage families in the EIC as well as creating networking opportunities for them.)*

### Solutions Across Systems Committee

Chair- Eric Bostick - 732-8400 or [ebostick@caiu.org](mailto:ebostick@caiu.org)  
*(Focuses on the efforts of OCDEL to develop a cohesive early intervention system (birth through the age of beginners) by implementing best practices at the local level. Will address issues and changes to send consistent information and messages to families, providers and agencies.*

### Professional Development and Family Training Committee

Chair -Ann Timashenka - 732-8400 or [atimashe@caiu.org](mailto:atimashe@caiu.org)  
*(Provides training opportunities for families, child care providers and professionals.)*

### Child Find Committee

Chair - Amy Swartz 240-6320 or [aswartz@ccpa.net](mailto:aswartz@ccpa.net)  
*(Provides information and outreach to primary referral resources. Actively identifying new referral sources.)*

**Spring has arrived!**

