

VOLUME 2. ISSUE 1

FEBRUARY 2010

## ALABAMA FAMILY CHILD CARE ASSOCIATION

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### From The President

Dear fellow members, I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season, and received plenty of hugs, kisses, flowers and sweets for Valentines Day. Spring is just around the corner. My, how time flies. I have been very busy with my family, my group daycare, the running of the state association as well as sitting on the Department of Human Resources QRIS Committee (Quality Rating Improvement System.)

I would like to give a short overview of the QRIS program.

1. The QRIS program is voluntary
2. To participate in the program, you must be a licensed provider.

At this time there are 19 states that have implemented a statewide quality rating improvement system. More than 25 states are exploring or designing a QRIS system.

What is a Quality Rating Improvement System?

1. It is a method by which to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early and school age care settings.
2. It may be called a quality rating system. (QRS)

What Does a QRIS program look like?

1. It builds on the foundation of being licensed, and adds steps you must meet in order to move up the higher levels of the QRIS.
2. It offers support and incentives for reaching the higher levels of care.
3. You will receive recognized symbols such as stars, or hearts.

Why do we want to develop a QRIS?

1. The main goal of a QRIS is to improve the quality of programs through system wide improvements.
2. It will give the opportunity for participates to do the following:
  - A. Increase quality of care for children.
  - B. Increase parent understanding and demand for higher quality care.
  - C. Increase professional development of child care providers.
  - D. To create alignment between licensing, subsidy, quality, across child care, Prekindergarten and Head Start.
  - E. Link support and initiatives to a quality framework.
  - F. Provide an accountable measure for funding.

For more information on the 19 states and their components go to the National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center at <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov> this website will give you all 19 states rating systems.

The goals Alabama has put out for their QRIS:

1. Improve the quality of child care.
2. Increase the number of licensed quality care and education programs.
3. Increase the percentage of children in quality early care and education programs.
4. Establish recognizable ratings that identify quality care and education programs.
5. Reward quality early care and educational programs.

The four components we have so far talked about are:

1. Staff Qualifications and Professional Development.
2. Learning Environments and Curriculum.
3. Parent and Community Partnerships.
4. Management and Administrative Practices.

We are now at the process of deciding what items need to go under each of these components. If any member has any suggestions or thoughts on this, please contact me at 256-784-6262 or by email [Nanap2three@yahoo.com](mailto:Nanap2three@yahoo.com)

This program is still in the planning stages, and as you know, when dealing with state government, changes occur at each meeting, so please remember, this is a draft and we will be working for a few more months before we have a completed QRIS program.

I attend each meeting, not only as the President of the ALFCCA, but as a dedicated Child Care Provider with great interest in what this committee is doing for children we care for today **AND** tomorrow.

Thank you for all your support,

*Marg Peterson*

## **ALFCCA MEMBERSHIP**

### **Renewed Members:**

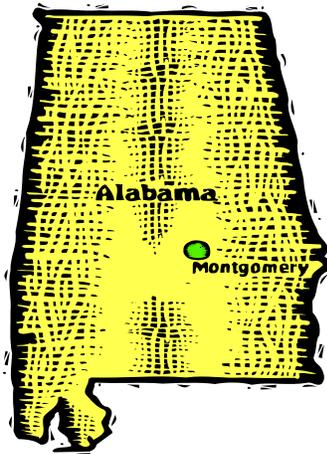
Mae Gillispie- St.Clair County

For membership information contact Katrina Lister  
Membership Coordinator:  
256-837-0858 or [k.lister@knology.net](mailto:k.lister@knology.net)

Please contact Katrina with any change of address,  
telephone number or email.

Membership Information:  
Local Associations: \$175.00  
Licensed Family Child Care Provider: \$35.00  
Advocate: (No Voting) \$10.00

STAND UP FOR ALABAMA'S CHILDREN  
SUPPORT ALFCCA



*"While children certainly need to learn about rules and consequences,  
they also need the staunch support of grown-ups who help them  
believe they can make it through."*

*Fred Rogers*

# CONFERENCE'S

## **FOCUS ON FAMILY CHILD CARE CONFERENCE**

**June 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>**

**Auburn, Alabama**

**“ Building Firm Foundations”**



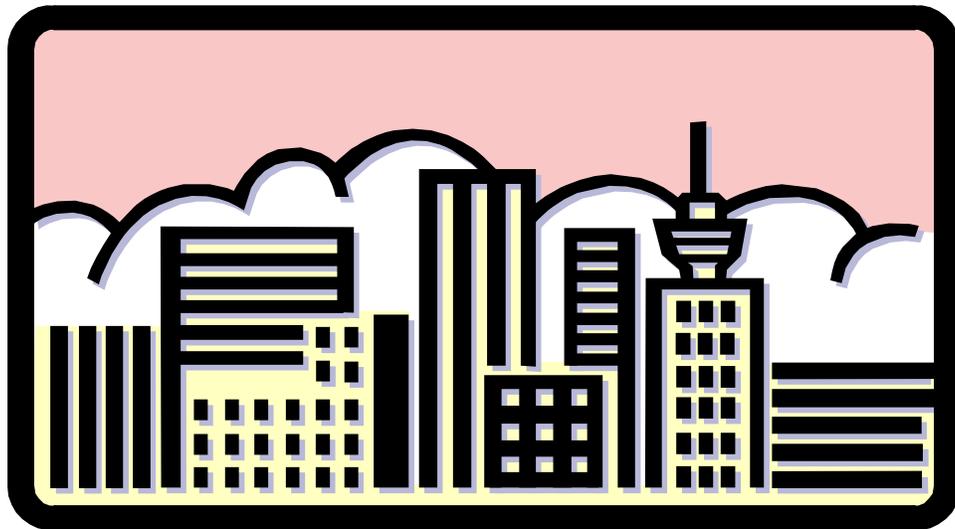
**FEATURING:  
The Ooey Gooey Lady  
And  
Debbie Clement**

**Program and registration materials will be available in March.  
You can request a registration package by contacting Peter  
Miller at 1-334-524-0161 or [millepc@auburn.edu](mailto:millepc@auburn.edu)**

# NATIONAL FAMILY CHILD CARE CONFERENCE

**Coming to Nashville Tennessee!!**

July 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>



You can access more information by going to the National Family Child Care website at: <http://www.nafcc.org/> for more conference information.

The ALFCCA has a limited number of scholarships for this conference. Please contact Marg Peterson at 256-784-6262 if you are interested. You must be an ALFCCA member in good standing to qualify for this scholarship.



## **Leadership Series: Striving For A Successful Association**

If your association wants to be productive and be able to accomplish the goals set forth by its board, it must recognize the basics of a successful run association. The most important element of a successful association is **leadership**. When the leadership starts seeing signs of the association start to waver they need to act quickly to meet the needs of its members as well as the direction that the association is heading toward. Quick action on the leader's part will get the association back on sure footing. **Most associations fail due to poor leadership.**

### **What To Look For In Successful Associations**

Associations that are found to be successful are recognized by having goals that meet the needs of its members; and where their input is respected and welcome. This should be a place where members feel they can go and be heard and respected for their participation and where they feel safe and comfortable sharing their thoughts and ideas.

A successful association is one that is actively involved in the child care community by staying informed, and active in advocacy efforts on the behalf of its membership. Sharing this information in a timely manner with all members is the **leadership's responsibility**.

A successful association is always preparing for the future of its membership. Recruiting new members, and reaching out to current members shows a **professional attitude and good leadership skills.**

Associations that run into problems are also recognized by certain traits. They are a group that do not respect each other's opinions or listen to new ideas of its membership. An association is not just about the executive boards opinions but must be about all the memberships opinions.

Associations with problems are not able to accomplish goals or even begin to set goals. There has to be efforts made by all leadership and membership to make the association grow and move forward for the betterment of the profession and the association. In associations that have ineffective leadership it is common when problems arise, which happens often they are either ignored or handled without regards to the ones involved. Members in these associations do not feel a part of the association because they do not feel respected or welcomed into the decision process, so they have no real reason to be committed to the goals.

If you feel your association is in trouble set a time to review some of the characteristics of the running of your association and your leadership abilities by making a list of your good characteristics along with your ineffective characteristics. Look where improvements can be made and adjust. This will show your commitment to being an effective leader.

“Leadership is the process by which one person or a group set standards and expectations that influence the actions of others. **Leadership is Action – not a Position!** Leaders possess special skills and qualities that are combined to get others to do what they want.”

### Getting It Right ... The First Time

This is a wonderful leadership handbook that I recommend every association executive board should have. It can be ordered from PathFinders Unlimited, Inc. at 954-587-6735.

Next Newsletter: Leadership Styles



### **PROVIDER TIPS:**



#### **Rack' em Up**

If your coat closet is too full or you do not have one by the near the door, make a coat rack out of a wooden changing table. Attach blunt screws hooks to the side of the changing table. Use the middle shelf for diaper bags and backpacks. The bottom shelf would be a great place for shoes

and boots to be stored. You could still use the top for a diaper changing area if desired, or a place to put the children's daily folders for parents too see.

### **Art to Go!**

Keep a suitcase or large see through container filled with extra art supplies. When you want to do art activities outside just grab your bag and go!

### **Baby Bottle Storage:**

Use a 6- pack soft bottle container to keep your bottles upright in the refrigerator.

### **Toy Washer:**

Put your washing machine to work washing Lego's, small plastic cars and trucks, plastic animals. Just add your Clorox and a few drops of dishwashing liquid and let the machine do the work.

### **Childcare Websites:**

[www.humsci.auburn.edu/fccp](http://www.humsci.auburn.edu/fccp)- Family Child Care Partnership- Assisting family childcare providers with raising the quality of child care services they deliver.

[www.focalfocal.org](http://www.focalfocal.org)- FOCAL provides advocacy on behalf of low- income children and families of Alabama, and also advocates for quality in the childcare field.

Alabama Association For Young Children- the AAYC is dedicated to improving educational opportunities for children birth through age 8 by offering professional development to the early childhood community. [Melissa.werner@Athens.edu](mailto:Melissa.werner@Athens.edu)

National Child Care Information Center- [www.nccic.acf.hhs.gov](http://www.nccic.acf.hhs.gov) - Is a service of the Child Care Bureau and is a national clearinghouse and technical assistance (TA) center that provides comprehensive child care information services and TA services to childcare and Development Fund (CCDF) Administrators and other key stakeholders.

[www.RedleafPress.org](http://www.RedleafPress.org)- Resources for Child Caring

[www.alavoices.org](http://www.alavoices.org)- Documents and tracks the well being of Alabama's children.

Consumer Product Safety Commission: [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov) - Provides updates on defective products and recalls.



## LOCAL ASSOCIATION NEWS:

### **Montgomery Home Child Care Association:** **Lillie Hood**

A huge Thank You to Lillie Hood, Lynn Moody and Yolanda Green for helping gather recipes from their area. You did a wonderful job and ALFCCA salutes your association. I have a correction to last quarter's association news from Montgomery. Yolanda Green held the Clothing exchange with some help from the MCHCCA.

### **DeKalb County Home Childcare Association:** **Contact: Brenda Blansit**

Brenda is reporting a very declining child care situation in DeKalb County. This area has long been known for it's textile factories and has had numerous closings the past few years. I appreciate so much all Brenda's efforts in helping ALFCCA in her area.

### **Madison County Home Child Care Association:** **Earlene Mitchell, President**

The HCCA is looking forward to an exciting year of upcoming events. One such event will be the National Family Child Care Association Conference right up the road from us in Nashville on July 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>, 2010. We are really exciting about the opportunity that Alabama can make a great showing.

Some of the events we are planning for this year are:

1. The Week of the Child
2. Provider Appreciation Day
3. The Family Child Care Partnership Conference, Auburn AL.
4. The National Family Child Care Conference

As you can see we are a very busy association and are looking forward to another year of fellowship with our members.

ALFCCA appreciates all the HCCA member's submissions for the cookbook. If they can sell like they worked gathering they will be bringing in some dollars for their efforts! Thanks for a job well done.

## **Jackson County:**

### **Robin Taylor**

The Jackson County HCCA meet quarterly. They have 5 hours meetings each quarter and have guest speakers such as DHR and Helping Hands of North Alabama. The ALFCCA thanks Robin for her recipes sent for the ALFCCA cookbook. She is already is taking orders for the A+ cookbooks, wanting to earn some money for her association. Thank you Robin ALFCCA appreciates your efforts.

## **Lee County:**

### **Margaret Jackson**

The ALFCCA was happy to have Lee County represented in our A+ Cookbook! Margaret sent us some wonderful recipes and I look forward to making some of her wonderful dishes.

## **Limestone County:**

### **Sonya O'Shields**

## **Morgan County:**

### **Marg Peterson**

Marg has been very busy in her new role of President of the ALFCCA; she is looking forward to recruiting some of the Morgan county providers as ALFCCA members.

## **Jefferson County:**

### **President: Patricia Upton**

All meetings (Unless indicated) are at Bruno's Grocery Store on the corner of Lorna Rd. and Hwy. 31 in Hoover

The Jefferson County Association focuses on the needs of family child care providers and is run by family child care providers.

Yearly dues are \$20.00 and the benefits include:

1. Monthly trainings to fulfill licensing requirements.
2. A chance to network with other providers.
3. A to be understood by your peers.
4. Share concerns, and get answers to your questions.
5. Monthly reminders about meetings.
6. Non-members can attend training for \$5.00 per session.

## **Shelby County:**

### **President: Tammy Lipham**

The ALFCCA would like to thank Shelby County providers for their participation in sending recipes for the A+ Cookbook.



The Alabama Family Childcare Association would like to recognize **Tammie Amesbury** as the provider of the quarter for her dedication to children and working families of Alabama.

Tammie has been a state licensed early childhood educator for over 18 years, beginning her career in Tennessee. She cares for children six months to six years Monday through Friday. She owns a group family childcare business. Tammie is very well known for her care of special needs children in Madison County.

She is married to David and they have three children of their own and Tammie has three stepchildren and they have five grandchildren. Tammie comes from a very close-knit family that lives in Harvest. She is the youngest of nine children. She has five brothers and three sisters. Her father was a cattle farmer and Tammie loved being outside on the farm. She was a big-time tomboy and learned to drive a hay truck by the age of twelve!

What Tammie loves best about her profession is the ability to offer children a home environment while at the same time offering them an educational head start while their parents are working. She is an Accredited provider that she obtained through the Auburn Family Child Care Partnership Program. She is a member of the Madison County Home Childcare Association as well as the Alabama Family Child Care Association. She actively works as networking chairperson for the MCHCCA, and has also been a Girl Scout leader.

She chose her career path based on her desire to be home with her children and also to be able to help financially in raising her family. Tammie's mother played a huge part of Tammie becoming a child

care provider. Tammie spoke about her mothers nurturing ways with nieces and nephews that were always around their home. The family all lived within a 5- mile radius of each other so children were always running and playing around their home.

*The ALFCCA thanks Tammie for her support to our organization and congratulates her on professional achievements in the family child care field.*



*Tammie Amesbury*

*Madison County Provider*

# **TORNADO SAFETY** **PREPAREDNESS:**

Map out a safety plan for your family child care home.

The general rule for tornado safety is to **“go low and get low.”** Go to the lowest level of the structure you are in, away from windows; crouch in a low position, protecting your head. Use couch cushions, pillows or sleeping bags to cover your head.

## **Opening windows to equalize pressure is ineffective.**

A NOAA radio would be an emergency tool all child care facilities should utilize.

## **What should be in a Tornado Disaster Kit**



As part of your preparedness, it is good to assemble a tornado/disaster safety kit and keep it in the place you have designated as your safe place. The kit should include supplies such as:

1. A first aid kit with essential medications if needed.
2. A portable battery operated radio with extra batteries.
3. A flashlight with extra batteries.
4. Emergency food: canned or non-perishable items.
5. Hand operated can opener.
6. Bottled water.
7. Candles and matches.
8. Sturdy shoes and work gloves.
9. Written instructions of how to turn off your home utilities.
10. Cash and credit cards.

# ALFCCA BUSINESS NEWS:



## ALFCCA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING JANUARY 16<sup>TH</sup>, 2010

The ALFCCA held its board meeting at Marg Peterson's Home in Falkville. In attendance were Marg Peterson, Claudia Keith, Misty Chambers, Katrina Lister, Fran Clampitt and advisory board members Amy Waine, Teumbay Barnes and Susan Dole Robinson.

Marg brought the meeting to order and Misty read minutes from previous meeting and Marg gave the treasurer report. Printed packets will be mailed to all present at the meeting with meeting notes and discussions.

Katrina gave the updates on membership. Katrina stated that membership has slowed down, even though membership renewal letters have been sent out. We discussed that one possibility being the economy. We told the advisory board about our new payment plans that were adopted back in the fall. We are planning for a major membership drive at the FCCP conference in June.

Fran reported on the cookbook fundraiser progress. Recipes were slow in coming in so Fran asked board members as well as advisory members to reach out to help obtain the recipes for the fund raising project. We chose cover design, font and other pertinent information and got it submitted to our cookbook editor Susan Parks. Susan did the book online and saved us time and money. I am proud to announce that with all board members and advisory members help and dedication to this project we were able to complete the project and the cookbook is in printing and expected to be shipped in mid March.

### New Business:

**Marg presented 2010 FCCP conference information** that she had received from Peter Miller FCCP Conference Coordinator. The conference will be held June 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. Opening session will start at 1:00- 2:30 Friday with a report on the State of Child Care in Alabama. Friday night there will be a possibility of a hot reception if sponsorship is found. The ALFCCA will have its booth in the same space as last year. Board and advisory members were asked to help with gathering door prizes. We were asked to present a workshop on professional development and will start working on finding a presenter for this. We discussed having our local associations again make a cash donation for a grand prize. ALFCCA will possibly holding a membership breakfast Saturday morning. More details will be given at a later date and information will be emailed or sent to ALFCCA members.

**The National Association for Family Child Care** conference will be held on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> in Nashville Tennessee. For scholarship information please contact Marg Peterson .

**The website** was discussed in detail before a conference call with Chris Powell from iWeblogic . Chris has been communicating with Amy and Marg and there were some questions about the consistency of how the website would be launched and what fees would be incurred by the ALFCCA, and Amy. Chris informed the board that he was donating his time in building the website since we were non-profit. Hannah had bought the program and inserted the childcare data in and then was able to hand over the project to iWeblogic to be built and maintained. Amy wanted to make sure membership could be done on-line and ads could be purchased directly from the site, and it could be updated in a timely manner. Amy will maintain the monthly website fee of \$ 49.00 for one year and will give consideration at the end of 1 year to see if she will make the donation again. We are waiting on the proposal from iWeblogic at this time and hoping to have it up and running this spring. Fran has talked with several web designers and they all have said when they do free websites we are at the mercy of their business commitments so lets hope we can see progress on this site soon. We explained to our advisory board how we would use this website, and the difference in this site and our site with FCCP. They concurred this was an excellent plan.

Website ad forms and revenues were addressed. Amy will remain in charge of getting the website up and running. Any member that would like to help with obtaining ads please contact Amy at: 205-616-9772 or by email at [bamswaine@aol.com](mailto:bamswaine@aol.com). This could be a personal ad, parents who may have businesses that would like to advertise or companies that are in your area. The ad rates at this time are \$50.00 for 3 months for a business size ad. Have anyone interested to contact Amy.

**Teumbay Barnes, Child Care Organizer for FOCAL and ALFCCA Advisory Board Member** asked about the ALFCCA Policy Goals for 2010. We really had not discussed these in detail at that time, but did discuss by email the goals we had talked about when Marg was elected. The goals have been drafted and will be up for discussion at the April 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. We have a tentative meeting place at the Family Guidance Center in Montgomery at 11:00 until 2:00. It will be a working lunch so please bring your own lunch. If there is a change an email will be sent out.

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## **ALFCCA Policy Goals for 2010:**

**The ALFCCA Policy Goals for 2010:** These goals will be discussed further at our April 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. If any member would like to comment on a goal or offer a suggestion for other goals please contact Marg or Fran before April 15<sup>th</sup> so they can be included on the agenda. Contact information is on the first page of newsletter.

1. **To Increase Communication** between providers across the state of Alabama and the association using effective ways of communication.

- A. We have created an informative on-line newsletter that serves as a way for all members to keep abreast of up-to-date information and issues concerning family childcare.
  - B. A Provider website has been provided by Auburn Family Child Care Partnership has been provided to the ALFCCA to give access to our members to find information out about their state association. A Parent- Child Care Resource website is in the process of being designed and hopefully operational by late spring of 2010. The site will list licensed child care providers whom wish to be on the site listed by counties in which they live to allow potential parents an easy way to find child care in the area they need. Child care links will be there for both parents and family child care providers where they will find websites that will help parents find quality childcare and providers useful information in the running of their businesses.
  - C. An open door policy to all members to be able to reach their executive board officers by email or telephone, and be assured they will receive a response in a timely fashion.
2. **Advocacy Policy:** To work along with other family child care advocates and organizations to advocate on behalf of licensed early care educators, children and working families of Alabama.
- A. Work diligently during the Alabama Legislative session to make sure that child care is funded appropriately through the year. This will be done by telephone calls, emails, and occasional visits with our state representatives.
  - B. Send updates to all ALFCCA members that the ALFCCA receives from Alabama's advocacy groups such as FOCAL. Alabama Child Care Alliance and Voices for Alabama Children's in order to help keep the early child educator as well as parents informed of child care issues facing this state.
  - C. The ALFCCA Executive Board will serve as a hub between Alabama licensed early care educators, parents and the legislature.
  - D. The ALFCCA will try to attend at least 50% of the child care advocacy meetings held by our child care advocacy groups throughout the state each year. We will also try to be present at many of the child care conferences that are geared toward family early care and advocacy as funding permits.
3. **Membership Goals:**
- A. To try and recruit at least 10 new members this year, and renew all current members.
  - B. To assist providers with payment plans if needed.
  - C. To contact each member once a year by phone or letter to ask if they have suggestions that will improve the association.

# ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS AND LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS!!!!

## Recipe Book's Are Here.

Fran will be making arrangements for delivery of the books to local associations, child care agencies, and providers in order to get help in getting them sold as quickly as possible. If you can presale the books it would be helpful. The name of the cookbook is

## A+ Recipes



A jam-packed cookbook with over 300 recipes from providers, parents, grandparents, child care organizations and special guest from Auburn Hills, Michigan. We are asking for a donation of \$12.00 for the A+ cookbook, it will be tax deductible. Email or call Fran with your order, a real must for all ALFCCA members! Bring your copy to the FCCP conference and get the recipes signed by members that are there! It will make a great keepsake for all ALFCCA members. You can reach Fran at 256-337-6067, daytime or 256-772-3284, night or you can email her at [franclampitt@knology.net](mailto:franclampitt@knology.net)

**Thanks to all that made this fundraiser possible!!!!!!!!!!!!**

**Local associations if you would like to try and sell some contact Fran at 256-772-3284 or 256-337-6067**



## **April Activities:**

Theme: Circus Time Comes to Daycare

Contributed By: Lee Ann Collins, Sunshine House Preschool. Lansing, MI.

From: Mailbox

**Where is the greatest place on earth to find shapes?**  
**At "The Greatest Show on Earth"- the circus!**

### **Gross Motor Activity: Walking a Tightrope**

The tightrope walkers at the circus are always a popular act. So invite your children to practice walking a tightrope the preschool way! In advance, place lines of masking tape on the floor of your circle time area. Then tape construction paper shapes to each end of the tape (2 of the same shape per line). Next cut out paper shapes to match those on the floor and then place them in a bag. To begin the activity, have a child pull a shape out of the bag, find the matching shapes on the floor, and then walk heel- to -toe across the line of tape between them. Continue until all children have had a chance to walk the tightropes. You could also incorporate colors and numbers into this activity.

**Seriating by Size: Balloons are always abundant at the circus.** To prepare for this activity cut out a set of different sizes and colors of felt materials in shapes of ovals to represent balloons. Hot-glue a piece of yarn to each oval to create a pretend balloon. Place near your felt board and invite each child to line up the balloons from the smallest to largest. For an extra challenge add a set of circular balloons to the oval ones. Have children sort the balloons by shape and then arrange each set by size. This activity can be expanded to counting, colors and patterning.

### **Song: Tune " Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze"**

Oh, they float through the air  
With the greatest of ease  
Circles and ovals  
Fly high in the breeze.  
Triangles, rectangles,  
And squares, if you please.  
The shapes are all flying away!

**Books:**

Dr. Seuss's All Aboard The Circus Mc Gurkus/ The Nursery Collection

This book is for 12 months up to 2 years. It has flaps so children can interact with provider.

Olivia Saves the Circus By Ian Falconer

**Snack:** Cookie Carousel

Each child will need 2 large oatmeal cookies, icing and animal crackers. Have each child ice their cookies using craft sticks. Have children stand animal crackers in a circle in the icing. Add the other oatmeal cookie icing down on top to create an edible circus treat.

**May Activities:**

The Garden

From: Everything Preschool

[www.everythingpreschool.com/themes/gardening/books.php](http://www.everythingpreschool.com/themes/gardening/books.php)

**Fine Motor/ Art Activity:**

Garden Scene Painting

Need: Blue finger paint, tissue paper, for flowers or colored cupcake liners can be used, paper or pipe cleaner stems, seeds, sand or green Easter grass, finger paint paper.

Directions: Have children finger paint on paper and then stick on tissue paper flowers or the cupcake liners. Then have them stick on the stems and sand or grass to form a garden delight.

**Science:**

Carrot on a String

Core out a carrot on top for each child to have one, then make a hole so you can hang the carrot from a string. (I would use ice pick or a small drill to make the hole through the carrot.) Hang it somewhere where it will get sun. Have the children put a little water in the top. In a few days your kids will love the results!





Tune: I'm a Little Teapot

I'll plant a little seed in the dark  
dark ground.

Out comes the sun, big and  
round.

Down comes the cool rain,  
soft and slow.

Up comes the seed,  
grow, grow, grow!

**Books:**

In My Garden: A Counting Book By: Ward Schumaker

I'm a Seed

By: Jean Marzolla

# June Activities:

From A' to Z Childcare Directory <http://www.atoz-childcare-directory.com>



## Summer Fun and Insects

**Science:** Go on a bug hunt to see what bugs you can find. Talk about the ones that fly and the ones that crawl. If possible find a caterpillar that you can keep in a container. Record and discuss the changes as the caterpillar goes through the different stages until it changes into a moth or butterfly.

**Art:** Have the children paint a pet rock. Have good size flat rocks for them to choose from to paint and keep for their own special pet. I have found some great flat rocks at the Dollar Tree.

**Dramatic Play:** Let the children run a lemonade stand around pick up time for parents. Let the children pour, collect the money and learn to be young entrepreneurs while having fun at the same time! The parents will love it too.

### **Books:**

Alpha Bugs by David A. Carter

An alphabet pop-up book that you can touch, feel, scratch and stiff.

Daddy is a Doodlebug by Bruce Degan

A rhyming, whimsical look at the companionship between a father and son.

The Flea's Sneeze by Lynn Downey

When a flea sneezes he startles the residents of the barn in this funny, rhyming read aloud book.

**Songs:** "Itsy, Bitsy Spider" and the Ants Go Marching One by One.

**Math:** Have the children sort different size rocks into groups of small, medium and large. **Be cautious of younger children around rocks.**

**Gross Motor Activity-** Let the children run through the sprinkler.



## **Fran on Advocacy News:**

Thanks to the efforts of our Montgomery Child Care Advocacy Organizations and your submission of great Market Rate Surveys, reimbursement rates for early care educators serving children on the Child Care Subsidy Program were raised in most age groups all across the state. Congratulations to all of you on your efforts to help the children and working families of Alabama.

The Alabama Legislative session began its 2010 session and childcare organizations were out in numbers fighting for the children of this state. The Child Care Alliance held a Day at the State House with FOCAL, The Federation of Child Care Centers and Voices for Alabama's Children and members of the Alabama Child Care Alliance. This is a day where we do a press conference on the state of child care in Alabama. We take time to try and talk with our representatives from our own areas and let them know we are there on behalf of children and what issues we are concerned about. We follow up with emails or calls throughout the session and during the year.

The ALFCCA, Madison County Home Child Care Association and Montgomery County Home Child Care Association and South Alabama Family Childcare Organization are all members of the Alabama Child Care Alliance. I would like to share the latest information I have from ACCA with all members.

On February 23<sup>rd</sup>, I attended an Alabama Child Care Alliance (ACCA) meeting on "Communication Framing." Hosted by VOICES

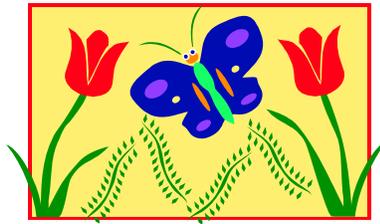
VOICES (VOICES for Alabama's Children) along with the **Topos Partnership** held focus groups in order to find out what people knew about child care in general and particularly "exempt", "unregulated", "unlicensed" care.

What we learned through their findings was that the way in which we **communicate** our messages is very important in the **outcome** of what we want them to hear. The use of certain words and how they are used gives **clarity** to our message. Topos's mission is to explore and ultimately transform the landscape of public understanding of what we are wanted to say and how to go about saying it to get our point made in a clear precise manner. We all know what "unlicensed" care is, that is if you are familiar with child care. The average person on the street may not know anything about child care. So we have to learn to frame our words in order to make our communication clear to all people.

As far as the most important thing I brought away from this workshop is that the words we have been using for our dual child care system in Alabama are unclear to most. When we are advocating on the issue of "exempt", "unlicensed", and unregistered childcare we are sending a confusing message to the ones we are speaking to. The word I want all of you to remember is **"UNINSPECTED"** childcare. This gives a visual to the point we are making. Doctor's, hairdressers and restaurants are all required to meet certain standards, and people understand this. They have to meet certain standards in order to operate their businesses. Shouldn't all of Alabama's children have the certainty that there are standards to protect them? The answer is "yes" and we will continue our mission of working with all of Alabama's child care advocacy organizations to learn

how to communicate more effectively as advocates. As early care educators we need to continue our quest to educate ourselves further and we at ALFCCA hope we are providing you with information that will allow you to grow personally and professionally. Thank you for your support of ALFCCA and your dedication to children and families. I should be receiving a Power Point on this presentation if anyone is interested in looking it over. It was a very informative workshop.

*Fran*



Have a wonderful spring and we will see you at the FCCP Conference this summer!!!!