



The Early Edition

Summer 2012, Volume 2, Issue 3

Greetings from the Executive Director

Welcome to the back-to-school issue of The Early Edition! As summer comes to an end and the new school year is right around the corner, this is an excellent time for parents and caregivers to start planning for the year ahead.

Whether your child will be attending school or child care for the first time or returning to the classroom after a long summer break, it is helpful to think about how you will help him or her make this transition. There are several ways that you can help your child prepare for a new schedule and environment:

- **Start a bedtime routine at least a week before school begins:** establish a sleeping schedule for your child so he or she can adjust to going to bed early and waking up early. Preschoolers should get between 10-12 hours of sleep per night.
- **Let your child be part of school planning:** whether it is picking out an outfit for the first day of class or choosing a backpack, let your child feel involved in the decision-making process.
- **Talk to your child about what they should expect:** many children will wonder when school begins and ends, what they will eat for lunch, and how they will get home after school. By answering these questions ahead of time, you will help your child feel more relaxed on the first day.

For parents and caregivers who still have questions about the enrollment process, please contact the DC Public Schools Critical Response Team at (202) 478-5738. If you have questions about your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or transportation, please contact the principal at your child's school.

We at Early Stages hope you enjoy the rest of your summer and find the information in this newsletter helpful.

Heather Elliott
Executive Director, Early Stages

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COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Early Stages Receives Grant from American Academy of Pediatrics

Earlier this year, Early Stages partnered with the DC Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and received a grant to support our work with health care providers. This grant, part of the Healthy People 2020 Initiative of the US Department of Health and Human Services, also includes Strong Start, the DC Early Intervention Program for children ages 0-3, as well as other local agencies and organizations.

Early Stages and Strong Start are using this grant to highlight the importance of developmental screenings, as well as discuss how health care organizations can implement a universal screening process. We have also provided training to health care professionals on how to make a referral to Early Stages

or Strong Start if they have a concern about a child's development.

The AAP recommends that pediatricians be skilled in screening techniques, seek input from parents about their child's development, and create links with available resources in the community.

Early Stages is excited to work with all our partners in this grant, including the DC Departments of Health and Mental Health, DC Action for Children, and the Arc of the District of Columbia, to support the health care community in providing our city's youngest children with needed early intervention services.

For more information, please call Early Stages at (202) 698-8037.

New Professional Development Available: Addressing Challenging Behaviors

Early Stages is now offering a new professional development training for child care centers and other organizations that serve young children.

This presentation, titled "Addressing Challenging Behaviors," discusses some of the triggers that cause challenging behaviors, as well as strategies for teaching positive replacement behaviors. This workshop also examines the relationship between challenging behavior and social emotional development, and provides tips for teachers on classroom management.

There are two versions of the presentation. One version is 90 minutes long and covers basic information about challenging behavior. The other version is 3 hours long and goes into greater detail about behavior intervention.

Early Stages is approved by the Office of the State

Superintendent of Education to provide professional development to child development centers and schools on a variety of topics. These presentations count towards the clock hours that child development centers need for accreditation.

If you would like to schedule a training for your organization, please call (202) 698-8037 or email education@earlystagesdc.org



Calendar of Events

Sensory Story Time

When: Saturday, August 11th
2:00pm

Where: MLK Library, Children's Division
901 G Street, NW Washington DC

What: Sensory Story time is open to children ages 3-6. It is highly visual, and often the same story is presented in different ways (e.g., books and puppets). This is great way to make books accessible to all children!

For more information, please call (202) 727-1248.

Ward 4

Community Conversation hosted by Advocates for Justice

When: Saturday, August 18th
10:00am-2:00pm

Where: Emery Recreation Center
5701 Georgia Ave, NW Washington DC

What:

The Community Conversation will focus on how parents, schools, communities and the city can work together to ensure access to high-quality education opportunities for all children in Washington, DC.

DC General Family Fun Day

When: Friday, August 24th
11:00am-6:00pm

Where: DC General Hospital
1900 Massachusetts Ave, SE Washington DC

What: Part of the ONE City Safe Summer campaign, DC General will host this all-day event for families. To learn more, please call 202-727-6300.

DCPS Beautification Day

When: Saturday, August 25th
8:00am-1:00pm

Where: School sites around the district

What: This event, which has taken place every year since 2005, is an opportunity for the community to get together and spruce up participating schools before the first day of school. To volunteer or learn more, please email: dcps.beautificationday@dc.gov

Early Childhood Transition Week



The first week of school for preschool and pre-K students is known as Early Childhood Transition Week (ECTW). This year, ECTW will begin with home visits or parent conferences from **Aug. 27-29, 2012**.

Preschool and pre-K children **will not go to school on these days, even if your child will be receiving special education**. Your child's teacher will reach out to you and set up a time to meet.

Then, from **Aug. 30-31** children **will come to school in two small groups** (see below for the date your child will attend).

- **August 27-29:** No school for preschool and pre-K children (these dates are reserved for parent/teacher meetings).
- **Thursday, Aug. 30:** Children whose **last name begins with the letters A-K** will attend school.
- **Friday, Aug. 31:** Children whose **last name begins with the letters L-Z** will attend school.
- **Tuesday, Sept. 4:** **All preschool and pre-K children** will attend school together.

Building Gross Motor Skills

We all know that physical activity is an important part of staying healthy, and this is especially true for 3, 4 and 5 year olds. Physical activity helps young children practice gross motor skills so they can build the large muscles in their legs, arms and trunk. Gross motor skills include running, kicking, throwing, catching and jumping. Here are a few activities that help children practice this area of development.

Play Ball: practice throwing a large, soft ball back and forth with your child. You can also use this game to practice letters and numbers. Take turns saying the ABCs or counting forwards or backwards with each throw.



The Run-Around: give directions such as “run to the kitchen, touch the table, and come back,” or “skip to the slide, go down one time, and come back” or “hop up and down five times.” This game will not only boost your child’s gross motor skills, but their listening skills as well.

Balancing Act: place a long piece of string or tape on the floor and have your child practice walking on it in a straight line. See if they can walk the line on their tip-toes or jump down the line on one foot.



Please share your story!

We would love to hear more about your experience with Early Stages. What differences have early intervention services made for your child? Your experience can offer inspiration to other parents and caregivers who are about to embark on their own journeys with Early Stages (100 words or less is fine, more is fine too!) Some entries will be included in future issues of our newsletter. You can submit your story to: education@earlystagesdc.org.

Your story can help
inspire other
families as they
begin their
own journeys!

Early Stages is a District of Columbia Public Schools early intervention program that offers free developmental screenings and evaluations for children ages 3 through 5 years old. We are here to serve DC families by helping them identify delays in their children's development and to address those delays with appropriate services. Children referred to the Early Stages Center will receive a full evaluation and treatment and /or services for a diagnosed delay regardless of whether they go to a public school, private school, are home-schooled or have not yet entered the school system. The experts at our family-friendly Center are here to help children begin school ready to learn and succeed.

Strong Beginnings. Bright Futures.



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of Special Education

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