

Issue 1, January 2010

Dear Carol,

Welcome to the first edition of the Child Care Options eNewsletter - **theLINK**.

As we begin a new year I find myself reflecting on the past year. Despite extremely challenging economic circumstances, child care professionals continued to meet the needs of struggling families and children in Kennebec and Somerset counties.

Thank you for your passion and commitment in providing support and offering help and hope to the families and children you care for.

My New Year wish is that the worst part of this economic storm is now behind us and, if we continue to work together, we will emerge stronger. Anything is possible!

**Happy New Year!**

Rita Fullerton, Director  
Child Care Options Resource Development Center

## Business Tips: Tax Facts for Family Child Care Providers

- Sharon Abair, Education Specialist

Family Child Care Providers are required to:

1. File income tax returns (whether or not you are certified).
2. Pay self employment taxes when income is over \$400 per year.
3. File quarterly Estimated Tax returns if you expect to owe at least \$1000 in income taxes (after subtracting credits). For more information, go to [www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f1040es.pdf](http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f1040es.pdf).



Family Child Care Providers can:

1. Join the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to receive reimbursement for meals and snacks they serve to children and claim food expenses which are greater than those covered by CACFP.
2. Get liability insurance and claim this as a business expense.
3. Claim a portion of your household expenses such as insurance, mortgage interest, property taxes, utilities and rent or house depreciation. These expenses are divided into two categories: a) direct expenses for which the total amount can be claimed (advertising, food, paper supplies, child care toys/equipment), and b) indirect expenses for which a partial payment can be claimed (home repairs, mortgage payment, rent, mileage)
4. Check to see if you qualify for the Earned Income Credit (EIC). For more information go to [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

**Internal Revenue Tax Information Service number for tax questions: 1-800-TAX-1040.**

## Quality Certificates and Family Tax Credits

- Sharon Abair, Education Specialist

The Maine legislature passed a law that expands the income tax credit for child care expenses. A Maine taxpayer who enrolls a child in a child care center or home with a Quality Certificate is eligible for a double tax credit on their state income tax return. Currently an individual is allowed a credit against the tax otherwise due in the amount of 25% of the federal tax credit allowable for child and dependant care. In the new law, this credit doubles in amount if the child care expenses were incurred through the use of quality child care. The credit may result in a refund of up to \$500.

In order for families to be eligible for this tax credit child care programs must meet the Step 4 requirements for the "Quality for ME" Rating System. These programs have received Maine's highest quality rating. They have been accredited by a national organization, have staff with a high level of experience and education in early childhood education, and actively utilize Maine's Early Learning Guidelines and/or Infant Toddler Guidelines.

Let us help you achieve a Step 4 rating so your families can take advantage of this double tax credit. For more information on the "Quality for ME" Rating System, contact Sharon Abair, Education Specialist at 1-800-525-2229 or [edspec@skcdc.org](mailto:edspec@skcdc.org).

## SAVE THE DATE

### 17th Annual Kids, Kids, Kids Conference

Saturday, April 17, 2010

Child Care Options – Resource Development Center is once again holding a conference for child care providers. The conference will include a keynote address by Maine Senate President, Senator Libby Mitchell, and a variety of interactive workshops designed to meet provider training needs as well as providing great ideas for improving program skills. Participants can gather valuable resources from the vendor tables, network with other child care professionals, and enjoy good food.

Training certificates are awarded at each workshop and are accepted towards yearly training hours and towards a new CDA. Continuing Education Units (CEU) will be available to participants for an additional fee and are issued through the University of Southern Maine Continuing Education Office.

If you would like more information about the Kids, Kids, Kids Conference and its workshops, call Pam Soucy, Training Coordinator, at: 582-3110, ext. 25., or email her at: [training@skcdc.org](mailto:training@skcdc.org)

### Maine Roads Core Knowledge Training

| Course   | CKA Hours | Starts  | Location    |
|--|-----------|---------|-------------|
| Supporting Maine's Infants and Toddlers: Guidelines for Learning & Development | 30        | 1/13/10 | Augusta     |
| Introduction to Early Childhood Education                                      | 9         | 1/14/10 | Fairfield   |
| Caring for Infants, Toddlers, and Their Families                               | 30        | 2/4/10  | Waterville  |
| Weaving Diversity & Many Eyes, Many Voices                                     | 12        | 2/9/10  | Farmingdale |
| Inclusive Child Care   | 30        | 3/5/10  | Farmingdale |

For more information about any of the trainings listed in this newsletter or to see a complete list of trainings offered by Child Care Options, just call (207) 582-3110, ext. 25 or (800) 525-2229, or just [log on to our website](http://www.skcdc.org).

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## Quick Links

[CCO Newsletter](#)

[CCO Training Calendar](#)

[Quality for ME Application](#)

[Operation Military Kids](#)

## Free Elective Training

Pre-registration is required for all Child Care Options trainings.

## New! Lunch and Learn

For center-based directors and/or staff: Child Care Options will sponsor **Lunch and Learn** sessions on the third Wednesday of the month. Each session will cover a specific topic, so if you have a concern bring it to the session for later scheduling.

This month we will review the latest Maine Roads to Quality Training (MRTQ) 30 hour class Foundations of Center-Based Care, which replaces, and enhances the old course of the same name.

This is a free training and certificates will be available. Bring your own lunch and we will bring the dessert.

**Trainer:**  
Sharon Abair, Education Specialist

**1st Offering Date:**

January 20, 2010

**Time:**

11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

**Location:**

Child Care Options, Farmingdale

## Enhancing Your ECERS Score

Part of the Quality Rating System (QRS) involves having researchers come to your family child care program to conduct an observation using one of the Environmental Rating Scales (ECERS). Let's explore this tool together, talk about its history and uses, view some environments appropriate for your program setting, actually use the tool ourselves - all in an effort to prepare you to relax and enhance your score.

**Trainer:**  
Sharon Abair, Education Specialist

**1st Offering Date:**

January 28, 2010

**Time:**

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

**Location:**

Maine Children's Home, Waterville

**2nd Offering Date:**

February 9, 2010

**Time:**

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

**Location:**

Child Care Options, Farmingdale

## Ready, Set, Go! (RSG)

This is a training designed to educate youth workers, educators, counselors, and other community services agencies on military culture, the deployment cycle, fostering resilience in military families with kids, influence of the media, and building community capacity.

The intent of Ready, Set, Go! is to increase ordinary citizens' understanding of unique issue facing military families' kids and assist them in creating state and local Operation Military Kids Support Networks. School personnel, youth-serving agency staff, and civic groups may find RSG training especially beneficial.

**Trainers:**  
Karen Hatch-Gagne and Tiffany Gillespie, Operation Military Kids, Univ. of Maine Cooperative Ext.

**Date:**

March 9, 2010

**Time:**

6:00 - 8:30 p.m.

**Location:**

Cony High School, Augusta