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**Child Care Resource Development Center  
for Kennebec and Somerset Counties**  
A Program of Southern Kennebec Child Development Corporation

**the LINK eNewsletter**  
*Staying Connected and Informed*

Issue 8, August 2010

Dear Provider,

It is hard to believe that we are on the other side of summer and thinking "back to school". I hope you have enjoyed this beautiful summer weather and will take advantage of what remains! In this edition of theLINK you will find an article on the Strengthening Maine Families Project led by the Maine Children's Trust in partnership with the Maine Early Childhood Initiative. I have had the privilege of being a member of their diverse Steering Committee composed of professionals and parents who care about Maine families. Please take the time to read about the unique opportunity being offered by the project to child care programs throughout the state.

Sincerely,  
Rita Fullerton, Director  
Child Care Options, SKCDC

I welcome your feedback, thoughts, comments, and suggestions on how we can improve our services to you at [rita@skcdc.org](mailto:rita@skcdc.org).

### **Moving On Up!**

- Sharon Abair, Education Specialist

Hello Providers!

On July 9th the Department of Health and Human Services, Early Childhood Division made an exciting announcement concerning Quality for ME financial stipends for those programs moving up the system from Step 1 to 2 and from 2 to 3. These stipends will be available to programs starting October 4th. This was great news for those programs who have been working to move up and made the move after January 1 of this year and for those programs who are currently making improvements in anticipation of making the move soon. If you are wondering what you personally need to do in your program to move up to the next step, remember that on your report that you received after you applied it stated clearly on each standard the changes you would need to make. Call Child Care Options if you have misplaced yours!

Most of the changes that programs need to make to move up in Quality for ME have to do with how intentionally they plan for the



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### **Fun Days In August**

August 7th - [National Lighthouse Day](#)

August 9th - [Book Lover's Day](#)

August 10th - [National S'mores Day](#)

August 13th - [Left Handers' Day](#)

August 21st - [Senior Citizen's Day](#)

August 25th - [National Banana Split Day](#)

August 31st - [National Trail Mix](#)

individual children in care. In order to make our programs vital to all children and supportive of all the different learning styles and interests, early childhood programs must actively use the Early Childhood or the Infant Toddler Learning Guidelines and observe children on a regular basis. Developing a schedule, policy handbooks, employee handbooks, getting the Maine Roads to Quality Core Knowledge training that will raise your level of Registry certification and involving parents in your work are areas of program enhancement that will lead to moving up the steps. For more details about the standards, call or email your RDC and we will mail you some literature to review. Child Care Options is planning several training events in the next few weeks that will give you the tools to meet these standards and integrate them into your program.

1. The Early Childhood Learning Guidelines starts on August 24 and still has room for enrollment. It is here in Farmingdale- VERY convenient for providers in our immediate area. You will learn how to observe and plan for children as well as how to develop individual portfolios. AND it is fun!

2. On July 27 and August 3 we hosted two hour sessions on "Developing Parent Handbooks" and will repeat this if there is a demand later in the fall.

3. On August 11 and September 8 we will host a discussion about the ECERS observation process and I guarantee that you will leave with a clearer understanding of the tool and how to prepare for it.

Come on in! We are here to help!

Remember, this stipend funding is limited and will be awarded on a first -come, first-serve basis. The stipend is also based on the size of your program.

License capacity:	<u>12 and under</u>	<u>13-20</u>	<u>21-49</u>	<u>50+</u>
Step 1 to 2	\$200	\$225	\$250	\$300
Step 2 to 3	\$300	\$325	\$350	\$400

In order for programs in Kennebec and Somerset counties to receive the stipend you must contact Child Care Options. Call the Education Specialist at 1-800-525-2229 ext 13 or email [edspec@skcdc.org](mailto:edspec@skcdc.org) . We will need to verify that you have completed the move from one step to another. Programs who have moved from Step 1 to Step 2 or Step 2 to Step 3 since January 1, 2010 will also be eligible to receive the stipend.

## Caring For Children

- Sharon Abair, Education Specialist

On July 6, 2010 programs caring for children on a child care voucher saw an increase (quality bump) in their voucher reimbursement. This increase was effective only for programs that are enrolled in Quality for ME and are at a Step 2, Step 3 or Step 4.

## Day

### Upcoming Trainings

#### Introduction to Infant Mental Health

Date & Time:

Saturday, August 7

9:00 am-3:30 pm (breakfast & lunch included)

Wednesday evenings:

August 11, 18, 25 &

Sept. 1, 6:00-9:00 PM

18 hour training

Location: Maine Children's Home

Waterville

#### Operating a Family Child Care Business

This training is part face-to-face meetings & part online training.

Date & Time: Face-to-face meetings will be August 9, Sept. 13 & 20; 6-9 PM

Online work needs to be completed between meetings & on your own time.

24 hour training

Locations: Child Care Options, Farmingdale & Online

#### Understanding ECERS

Date & Time: August 11

6-8 PM

2 hour training

Location: Child Care Options, Farmingdale

#### Core Knowledge Portfolio

Date & Time: August 23; 6-9 PM

3 hour training

Location: Child Care Options, Farmingdale

#### Maine Early Childhood Learning Guidelines

Date & Time: Tuesday evenings: August 24, 31, Sept.

7. 14. 21, 28, Oct. 5, 12;

6-9PM

30 hour training

For programs currently at a Step 2, the bump increased from 2% to 5%

For programs currently at a Step 3 the bump increased from 5% to 13%

For programs currently at a Step 4 the bump increased from 10% to 25%

By October 4, 2010, the DHHS Early Childhood Division will also pay the quality bump for Step 4 programs serving TANF/ASPIRE funded children.

If you are a licensed/certified program you must be enrolled in Quality for ME in order to provide care for children on a child care voucher. Enrolling is easy:

1. Join MRTQ Registry (this will cost \$10)-call the education Specialist for an application or go to <http://mrtq.musk.usm.maine.edu> and complete the application online. YOU MUST PRINT AND SIGN THE APPLICATION AND MAIL IT TO MRTQ WHEN YOU FINISH!
2. After you get your MRTQ certificate, you are then able to join Quality for ME. You can do this either in paper copy (call Barbara Sousa-6247909 or [Barbara.d.sousa@maine.gov](mailto:Barbara.d.sousa@maine.gov) for a paper copy) or go to <http://www.qualityforme.org>. Once you enter your licensing number you can walk through the application in about 15 minutes. BE SURE TO HIT 'SUBMIT' WHEN YOU FINISH!

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## Strengthening Maine Families

- Amanda Lonsdale, Project Coordinator

*Strengthening Maine Families* supports child care providers to help parents become stronger parents. Child care providers learn to approach parents as the experts on their own children, to listen openly to their concerns and ideas, and to work together with parents to find answers to questions and concerns about child development. Rather than giving advice, this approach fosters more trusting relationships between providers and parents.

When child care providers work in partnership with parents, mothers, fathers, and other caregivers, then families are more likely to invite and welcome their child care provider's support in evaluating their children's needs, developing goals, and identifying effective ways to strengthen the family and provide care for children.

*Strengthening Maine Families* is a proven, cost-effective initiative that brings together early childhood center staff, family child care providers, parents, child welfare agencies, and their communities to strengthen families with young children. Getting started **IS EASY**, just click [here](#). First, take the online self assessment. Next, identify one area you want to improve, pick one strategy from the list, and then try it for a month. Note what changes occur--if it does not work try something else.

The early years matter. We know that a child's brain architecture develops much like building a house. Starting with a strong foundation, the framework for lifelong learning, growth and development is constructed through social and cognitive experiences. Key to this is the serve and return-the interaction of

Location: Child Care Options,  
Farmingdale

To register online click [here](#).

**Maine Early Care  
and Education  
Training Calendar** is now  
available online.  
Click [here](#).

**Resource Sharing from  
NACCRRRA (National  
Association of Resource and  
Referral Agencies)**

**Urban Institute Report "Kids'  
Share 2010: Report on Federal  
Expenditure on Children"**

**Best Evidence Encyclopedia  
(BEE): "Effective Early  
Childhood Education Programs:  
A Systemic Review"**

**New America Foundation  
Early Ed Podcast: "States  
Share Information on Quality  
Rating and Improvement  
Systems"**

**New America Foundation  
Early Ed Watch: "When Young  
Children Use Technology"**

**New America Foundation  
Early Ed Watch: "A Look at  
Proposed Federal FY 2011  
Funding for Early Education"**

## A Fond Farewell

Sharon Abair here! I just wanted to let you all know that it is with a heavy heart that I bid you all farewell as I leave Child Care Options in mid-August. I have thoroughly enjoyed my work here and have loved meeting so many wonderful providers in this area of the state. I will start my new position in September teaching toddlers- a return to the classroom that I have

a young child with the people and places around them. When families are better able to respond to a child's cues, that healthy experience supports the child and strengthens its family relationships.

*Strengthening Maine Families* is grounded in the research that recognizes how children develop and has identified the important protective factors that strengthen every growing family:

1. **Parental Resilience:** taking care of self and learning to manage stress.
2. **Social Connections:** creating natural parent support.
3. **Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development:** understanding leads to better parenting.
4. **Concrete Support in Times of Need:** helping Parents learn where to go when they need help.
5. **Social and Emotional Competence of Children:** helping children to communicate and understanding how to help them develop appropriately.
6. **Healthy Parent Child Relationships:** giving children the love and respect they need.

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### Updated Resource Brochure!

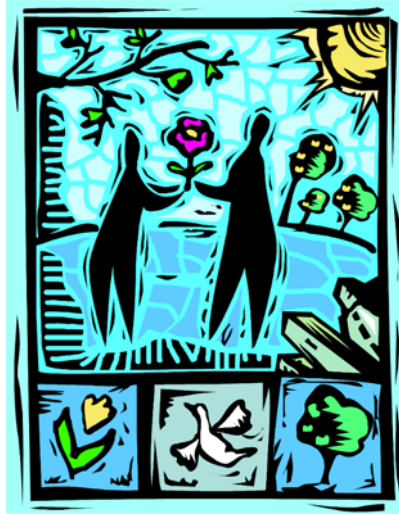
- Pam Soucy, Training Coordinator

We have updated our Resource Brochure for child care programs and families and it is now available to you.

Have you ever had to access or have a parent ask how to access information on heating assistance, elderly care, health insurance, etc?

We have compiled a listing of resources that are available in Kennebec and Somerset counties. The phone numbers and web addresses have been verified and the brochure will be a great resource for your use. But of course it is said 'put it in print and it is outdated', this is often true. We will strive to keep phone numbers and web addresses current. The updated version of the Resource Brochure can be found on our website, [www.ccordc.org](http://www.ccordc.org)

dreamed of for many years!  
Keep up your good work!  
Blessings to you all-



Did we miss an important resource in Kennebec or Somerset county? If so, please let us know [training@skcdc.org](mailto:training@skcdc.org) and we would be happy to add it to the brochure.

### Get Ready for Kindergarten

- Kelley Bowley, Resource & Referral Specialist

Do you know that August is [Get Ready for Kindergarten](#) month? Many parents will be sending their five year olds off to Kindergarten in September and with this change, their child care needs will change too!

Perhaps your child care program is changing, too?

By keeping Child Care Options up to date on your current vacancies, hours of operation and locations you serve ie bus routes & elementary schools we will be able to make accurate referrals. This will help make the transition to school easier on parents. It will also help you, the providers, to keep your slots full!

Please give us a call, or send a quick email, if any changes are in the works for you or your child care. We appreciate it, and so do parents looking for child care!

Contact Kelley at 582-3110, ext. 29 or [rr@skcdc.org](mailto:rr@skcdc.org) .

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