

Building BLOCKS

Issue 6
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November is National Family Literacy Month 13th Annual Cambridge Family Literacy Fun Day Saturday November 14th

CCRC belongs to the Cambridge Family Literacy Collaborative, coordinating this dynamic event on its behalf. We hope to top last year's attendance (900) with 1000 adults and children at Cambridge City Hall! As the photos of last year's Family Literacy Fun Day (left) attest, story telling, face painting, book making and more are the kinds of activities the Collaborative encourages to promote literacy development. The 5 essential messages are:

- Talk and listen to children every chance you get
- Let children see you read, write and do math
- Learn along with children
- Talk to teachers about children's background and culture
- Expect the best for yourself, your child and every child

**“The more that you read, the more things you will know.
The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.” Dr. Seuss**

Literacy begins at birth! And one way CCRC uses your support is to promote children's literacy development with parents, grandparents, caregivers and child care providers — all play an important role preparing young children to become motivated learners ready to succeed in school.

That's why we give books to children whenever we can and why so many programs incorporate a focus on literacy:

- **Art, Movement, and Music** is one way we reach out to families, gathering children and their caregivers in parks and other locations to read a story, sing, or dance — having fun and encouraging literacy development. This is also a way for families to learn about CCRC services — like how we can help them access affordable health care and child care.
- The Annual **Caring for Babies Forum** for parents, caregivers and providers, is a free collaborative event where we offer workshops for parents and caregivers that show them how to create a stimulating learning environment for children from 0 to 3 years old.
- **ABC Learning Groups** for children ages 1-5 and their parents or caregivers emphasize developmentally appropriate activities, group experiences, literacy, and social development. CCRC and the Center for Families run these 8-week groups to help caregivers learn how to encourage children's language development and learning.
- **Pathways to Family Success/ParentsROCK** is a partnership of CCRC, the Community Learning Center, Agenda for Children, Center for Families, and Cambridge Housing Authority. ParentsROCK brings together parents and children on Saturday mornings to build children's language and literacy skills. Parents work with children on computer learning, and attend monthly technology support sessions to develop their own computer literacy skills.

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Children, parents/caregivers enjoying CCRC's ART, MOVEMENT, MUSIC in the park (right)



Helping children thrive by supporting the adults who care for them

We often tell you CCRC believes the best way to help children thrive is to support the adults who care for them. You have told us you'd like to learn more about what this means in action, so we'd like to share two stories with you.

Heartfelt appreciation from a family CCRC has helped

"We would like to express our deep gratitude to you for Subsidy Services Specialist Kurt Armstrong's great job and help to get child care voucher for our son Robert. Kurt is a very kind, patient and nice person. He is highly professional. Kurt has a very good approach to explaining and helping people. He has a special heart and soul. Thank you for all the help you have given us with our son. Your assistance has been invaluable to us and we greatly appreciate your help."

Ivana, a mother of a 15 month old, emigrated to the U.S. from Serbia and came to CCRC to find health care:

"I came to Child Care Resource Center after months of struggling financially and with health issues. CCRC helped our family get health insurance, which was so important because of our high medical bills."

When Stephanie Lyda, Coordinator of CCRC's Health Access Project, helps families apply for health insurance she makes sure they learn how to access health care and use their benefits. She also asks about other needs and like most families we see, this family was struggling with the high cost of child care:

"Even though, I have a college degree, I haven't been able to find a job that pays enough for daycare and all our other bills. Stephanie helped me find an affordable place where my daughter is safe and I trust the teachers."

Ivana came to CCRC to find health care, but found support for dealing with several issues that were difficult for her family:

"Besides helping me get insurance and child care, Stephanie spent time talking with me about my family and my daughter's medical condition. This made me feel less stressed and I am able to understand what I need to do for her."

CCRC also supports adults who care for children through training, professional development and career counseling for providers. Paula Bowie, Professional Services Director, works with Jean Brathwaite, a mother of four who has been running a family child care business in her home for 14 years:

"I became a provider because I love to work with children, see them grow and develop, and provide a safe loving environment. Children's first years are so important and what we give to them has a strong impact on their later years. I know the value of my work, and want to do all that I can to meet the physical, social, intellectual and emotional needs of children in my care."

CCRC helped Jean navigate the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) accreditation process. The only national accreditation specifically for family child care providers, NAFCC accreditation is recognized as the best indicator of a program's quality.

"CCRC showed me the value of becoming accredited as a way to make sure my program is as good as it can be. Paula helped me take the steps I needed to take and make changes to become accredited."

NAFCC has standards in five content areas— Relationships, Environment, Developmental Learning Activities, Safety and Health, and Professional and Business Practices. Jean's message:

"The accreditation process was stressful but CCRC's help really made a difference. Paula helped me to make my house safer and plan good curriculum. I got the confidence I needed to pursue my goal—and I received accreditation."



Kurt Armstrong



New plans and new Board members

by Gloria Franqui, Executive Director

Planning for the future

As you may know, I have recently joined the organization as Executive Director, after a year as Interim Executive Director. I am thrilled to be working with a very talented Board of Directors and staff as we approach CCRC's 40th anniversary in 2011. In recognition of this milestone we are engaged in a planning initiative to take advantage of our unique position providing support and resources to parents and other caregivers of young children. We are currently surveying many of our collaborators, volunteers, and friends to help us look toward the future in this changing environment.

If I have not already met you, I hope I will soon. And I welcome your thoughts and inquiries. Thank you for all you do for CCRC, helping us to continue to ensure that all children thrive.

Our new members, Pam and Susan

Two new members to our Board of Directors, Pamela Rodes and Susan Shelby, will provide expertise in marketing and communications.

Pamela Rodes, a marketing professional with 25 years experience in various communication settings, was a Peace Corps volunteer for several years. When asked about why she wants to serve on CCRC's Board, Pam said, *"Although I knew intellectually the importance of early childhood nurturing, it became very real to me when I visited an orphanage in Romania and observed first-hand how a lack of good caregiving affects a child's development. That made me want to find a way to help as many children as possible by making sure they have the chance to grow up being cared for properly. When I learned that CCRC's mission was to 'help children thrive' I knew I'd found a place where I could help do that."* Pam is Senior Project Manager, Strategic Marketing at Pioneer Investments in Boston, where she has worked for the past ten years.

Susan Shelby, CPSM, Principal of Rhino Public Relations, told us she is interested in volunteering with CCRC because, *"as a working mother, I credit quality day care and after school care with making it possible for me to pursue my career and launch my business. I knew my son was in good hands so I could focus on my job while at work. Quality child care and after school care should be available to everyone and I am pleased to be part of CCRC's efforts to support and educate parents as they navigate parenthood and early childhood education."* Susan works with clients in the architectural, engineering and construction industry to establish and launch successful PR programs and is a Past President of the Boston Chapter of the Society for Marketing Professional Services (SMPS Boston) and was named one of the "Top 10 PR Specialists" by Women's Business Boston two years in a row.



Daniel Kingsbury, President and CEO of Pioneer Investment Management USA Inc. presented a check for \$2,000 to CCRC Executive Director, Gloria Franqui and remarked, *"With the Pioneer Helping Others program we make serving the educational, emotional and recreational needs of children our utmost priority. Sharing our financial resources with social and charitable organizations in our community is one way we try to help improve the quality of children's lives, and to ensure they have the chance to grow up as happy, healthy and productive persons. We're happy to support the mission and goals of CCRC and assist their efforts in our community."*

What your gift makes possible



- **Your \$25 donation provides:**
Books and supplies for parents and toddlers participating in a Playgroup or in Art, Movement & Music
- **Your \$50 donation provides:**
An outreach event for clients seeking information about health insurance - including eligibility determination, program enrollment and choosing a primary care physician
- **Your \$100 donation provides:**
Materials and handouts for 20 child care providers at a CCRC professional development training
- **Your \$500 donation pays for:**
10 hours of written translation services so that CCRC is able to make publications available to clients in their native languages
- **Your \$1000 donation supports the cost of:**
An accreditation support group training series for 15 family child care providers

Your gift to CCRC helps children thrive

Child Care Resource Center, Inc.

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Graphic Design: Colin Dockrill, HMFH Architects, Inc.



Child Care Resource Center promotes the healthy development and well-being of young children in Cambridge, Somerville and surrounding communities. Because we believe the best way to help children thrive is by supporting the adults who care for them, we provide access to services and resources for families, offer training and professional development for early childhood educators and caregivers, and build community initiatives that benefit children and their families.

CCRC programs:

- **Increase access to affordable, high-quality early education and child care.**
- **Increase access to health care and vital services parents need to ensure family wellbeing.**
- **Assist families to make informed decisions about their children's care and development.**
- **Build knowledge and skills of parents, caregivers, and child care professionals.**
- **Meet emerging needs of children and families in our communities through collaborative partnerships with private and public organizations.**

Your gift to CCRC helps children thrive