

ELPM BUILDING BLOCKS

Building a Future

A Quarterly publication for our partners, supporters, and friends

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For questions about child abuse, contact:
tiffanys@gacfca.org
or visit:

www.georgiacenterforchildadvocacy.org



THE NEED FOR INVESTING IN EDUCATION

*By Jane Simpson
Director of Development*

Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education

Scientific research shows that investments in quality early childcare and education pay large dividends for individuals and communities. Nobel-winning economist James Heckman has researched extensively on the importance of investing in children in their early years. According to Heckman, "Early nurturing, learning experiences and physical health from ages zero to five greatly impact success or failure in society. The most economically efficient time to develop skills and social abilities is in the very early years when developmental education is most effective."

The Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education has long championed the need for high-quality early childhood programs. Between birth and age five, the brain undergoes a rapid development and children learn more than during any other five-year period of life. Early experiences influence the development of children's cognitive and social skills and behavioral and emotional health. The first years of life largely determine a child's readiness for school and may be predictive of future academic success.

Research studies of successful early childhood programs make clear that participating children reap numerous positive benefits, including:

- Improved language, listening, word analysis, vocabulary, and math skills;
- Higher reading and math achievement from 6-15 years of age;
- Lower rates of grade retention and special education placement;
- Decreased likelihood of dropping out of school; and
- Decreased likelihood of involvement in the juvenile justice system.

In 2010, Georgia ranked 42nd among all states for overall child well being. A 2009 study by researchers at the University of North Carolina found that on average, center-based childcare across Georgia was of "low" to "medium" quality. Fiscal researchers are predicting that soon, revenues from the Georgia Lottery (which funds the state pre-kindergarten program) will not be able to keep pace with the demands for services.

The best use of state resources and political resolve will be the investment in Georgia's children so that they develop into safe, healthy, emotionally stable children who enter school ready and eager to learn.

For more information, please see *The Top Ten Issues to Watch in 2011*, which can be downloaded at www.gpee.org.

MINNIE HOWELL CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Gifts In Kind, the nation’s leading nonprofit provider of product philanthropy in the United States, recently honored John and Lizanne Stephenson by donating over 200 children’s books for young readers. These books were placed in The John W. Stephenson Media & Literacy Center at Minnie Howell Child Development Center, a state-of-the-art media center for 0-5 year olds. The Media & Literacy Center also includes a Parent Resource Room available to parents , family and teachers. This Resource Room is equipped with preschool toys, books, games and art activities that parents can check out to share with their little ones and other family members at home to encourage “at home learning”. It is also a place where parents can meet to share ideas on parenting and discuss with each other, as well as with teachers, any concerns they may have about the development, behavior and health of their children. The Media & Literacy Center is an engaging, interactive environment designed to inspire children to read, to explore books on their own, and to use their world of imagination. Minnie Howell Child Development Center is very grateful to Gifts in Kind for the generous donation of these wonderful books.



Ms. Anita Bonner, Program Director at Minnie Howell Child Development Center, unpacks and stacks the many books donated by Gifts In Kind.

For more information:
www.premier-academy.org
www.giftsinkind.org



YMCA PAULDING EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY



Meet **KAY POLLARD**, Center Director for the YMCA Paulding Early Childhood Development Academy. Kay is a PSC (Professional Standards Commission) certified teacher. She received a Bachelor's degree in Early Care and Education with a minor in childcare administration from Mercer University and plans to pursue a Masters of Education degree. Kay received her Associate's degree from Chattahoochee Technical College's Paulding campus, as well as serving in the child development lab at the college. After completing this degree, she began work on the Bachelor's degree at Kennesaw State University and graduated from Mercer University in May 2010. She has over 15 years experience teaching and directing young children and their families in childcare. She taught Georgia Pre-K

at the Paulding center for 5 years, served as the Georgia Pre-K supervisor, and for the past year has been the center's Director.

One of her many credits includes being chosen as one of 60 Mentor Teachers trained by Bright from the Start to help mentor and guide other Pre-K programs in the state. She has also worked with Bright from the Start's Georgia Pre-K program to assist Pre-K consultants in training by observing in her classroom and asking questions. Kay's dedication, professionalism and commitment to early childhood learning and education is a reflection of the high quality standards the YMCA promotes.

Kay and her husband have three children ranging in age from eleven to twenty-two years old and resides only ten minutes from the center in Cobb County. She has a busy family with children involved in basketball and baseball, high school marching and concert band, as well as attending and participating in church functions.

For further information on the YMCA Paulding Early Childhood Development Academy, please visit:
www.ymcaatlanta.org

WORKING TOGETHER FOR LITERACY

THE FERST FOUNDATION FOR CHILDHOOD LITERACY and VOICES FOR GEORGIA'S CHILDREN hosted Pre-K Day at the Capitol on 2/22/11 to launch an advocacy agenda to raise the visibility of literacy and reading readiness issues with both public and legislative support. Both organizations agree that reading is the single most important activity in preparing a child for school.

But an unfortunate statistic shows that 61% of low-income families do not have books suitable for children in the home. When these children begin school, they struggle to catch up with better-read peers. By 3rd grade their fate appears to be sealed as 75% students who are poor readers then will remain poor readers in high school. Students who don't read at grade level lose confidence and interest in school. Social problems ensue, such as dropping out of school, juvenile delinquency, teen pregnancy and drug abuse.

For more information on this advocacy, please visit:
www.ferstfoundation.org and www.voicesforgeorgiaschildren.org

Bobby Cagle, newly appointed Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Early Care & Education (DECAL) with Robin Ferst, Executive Director of The Ferst Foundation for Childhood Literacy and Pat Willis, Executive Director of Voices for Georgia's Children with Pre-K students from Metro Atlanta.



Pat Willis, Executive Director for Voices for Georgia's Children reads to children from local Pre-K centers during Pre-K Day at the Capitol.



Permission to reprint by Robin Ferst

"Spring" To These Great Deals



- General Admission tickets to the Georgia Aquarium are just \$15 through March 13.
- Uncle Maddio's Pizza, located in the Toco Hills Shopping Center has two deals on **Saturdays** for kids!
 1. Art Camp with Chef Cou-Cou from 11:00am—2:00pm; kids enjoy free pizza!
 2. Build your own pizza and kids will receive a free 6-inch pie with one topping. For details: 404-929-6700

Early Learning Property Management Mission Statement

To support and promote early childhood learning and development by providing safe and adequate facilities where early learning programs and activities can be conducted.



ELPM CENTER LOCATIONS

For ELPM center program information, please visit www.elpm.org



57 Executive Park
Suite 315
Atlanta, GA 30329

TO:

Our Partners, Supporters and Friends

