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Workforce Solutions Capital Area Child Care Provider News

You're Invited to the March Provider Advisory Council Meeting

Provider Advisory Council Meetings provide a way for Child Care Services providers to stay connected and up-to-date with news and information. We welcome your suggestions for agenda items. Please plan to join us for the next

Provider Advisory Council Meeting:

Thursday, March 28, 2019

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

**Workforce Solutions Capital Area North
6505 Airport Blvd Ste 101E, Austin, TX 78752**

Please RSVP by March 21, 2019

Note: Lunch will only be provided for those who RSVP

Texas Rising Star Achievements

Join us in congratulating...

New Texas Rising Star Providers

- Bright Kids CDC
- Children's Courtyard - Mopac
- Children's Courtyard - William Cannon
- Creative World
- Escuelita Del Alma
- Faith Lutheran CDC
- KIPP Austin CC EAC
- Sprouting Stars
- Rosie's Day Care 3

Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication to the children and families in Travis County!

WFS Quality Staff Announcements

Susan Helfeld, Child Care Quality Program Specialist, has left Workforce Solutions Capital Area for a position at another agency. She will miss working with all of you!

Did You Know?

We offer discounts to parents who choose quality rated providers. If you are interested in becoming quality rated and being able to market a new discount to your parents, please contact Michelle Crawford at michelle.crawford@wfscapitalarea.com to learn more about Texas Rising Star, our quality rating system.

CLASS Corner

Why Greeting Your Students is So Important

You've heard it said, "You never get a second chance to make a first impression." I would propose this addition: "Except in teaching!" Of course, we know the first moments of the first day of school are critical to establishing a tone for the year ahead, and we put a lot of energy into those first moments. It's always fun to prepare our classrooms for the new school year because we are full of renewed hopes and dreams.

One of the best things about teaching is having a fresh start each year, and all of that effort at preparation is important; we don't want to leave those first impressions to chance. But isn't it also true that we can all benefit from the reassurance of second chances? Greetings are an important part of setting the

impression each day. Let's take a moment to consider the impact of having that approach with our students, not only at the beginning of a new school year, but also at the beginning of each school day.

Why are interactions important?

CLASS is all about understanding the importance of teacher-student interactions. Regardless of age or grade level, the students in our classroom all communicate to us about their needs through their behaviors, and it is our responsibility to respond in ways that meet those needs. One way to understand the CLASS Domains on a very practical level is to look at what we communicate to students when we interact with them as we meet their needs.

- Emotional Support Domain interactions communicate, "I'm here for you."
- Classroom Organization Domain interactions communicate, "I make plans for you."
- Instructional Support Domain interactions communicate, "I'm ready to learn with you."

As we anticipate their arrival each day, we prepare ourselves to communicate "I'm here for you," and "I make plans for you," from the moment the students enter the classroom door. Each day is a new chance to communicate those messages to them. Whether it's the first day of school or the 101st day of school, greeting students with those messages in mind will firmly establish for everyone the importance of both the relationship and the intention of being there together.

Leaving behind the events of the morning, or yesterday, and allowing the students (and yourself) to have a fresh start each day allows us to cultivate hope and optimism in our classrooms. Hope and optimism allow students to have minds open for insight, learning and possibility, and a willingness to try new and challenging tasks.

Here are some everyday ways to show students, "I'm here for you" and "I make plans for you."

Be prepared

Have things ready for the students to do without your assistance so you can greet them and give them individual attention as they arrive. Set up engaging provocations on tables and in centers with high-interest materials you know they will enjoy, especially if you work in a setting with younger students and they are having difficulty separating. For older students, be ready before the bell rings so that you can greet them as they arrive, instead of putting the finishing touches on your preparations for the day.

Establish arrival and greeting routines

These kinds of routines establish trust and a feeling of safety in the classroom. When students know there are specific jobs to do when they arrive (taking care of personal belongings, washing hands, checking in, making lunch choices) they quickly get into the flow of the day. Special things they do with you—a secret handshake, greeting song or poem, an interesting quote or thought-provoking question/image on the board to spark discussion—allow them to re-establish connections with you and set the tone for the day. These types of activities are especially important for students who have connection deficits in their lives and relationships outside of school.

Even older students who change classes throughout the day can benefit from time to pause and connect about how their day is going when they arrive in your classroom. They may need time to decompress from a stressful morning at home or a challenging test in an earlier class. They may want to take a few moments to talk about things happening in the world and they may not have another adult willing to take the time to hear their perspectives on things. These few moments don't need to drag on and take away from the other content you need to cover that day. In fact, a few moments to pause and connect will likely help them to shift gears and be ready to take on the new material you have prepared.

Be at their level and ready when they enter the room

With younger students you can be seated in a chair at their level, and with older students you can be standing, ready, and welcoming them in. Greeting them with a big smile and an, "I'm so glad you're here today!" at their level communicates warmth and respect. This is especially important for students who had a rough day the day before. They may need a fresh start!

Be available to parents in a variety of ways

In many settings, parents drop off and pick up their children directly from our care. In these situations, communicate to parents at the beginning of the year (and each morning) that you have a moment to chat and check-in. However, if they need to have a more involved conversation you'll want to give them your full attention. Make sure parents have other ways to communicate with you—a personal communication log, email, sticky notes requesting a phone call later with a good time to call—and encourage them to use them! That way you can focus on greeting your students.

This post originally appeared on Teachstone.com.

Upcoming CCS Office Closures

Workforce Solutions Child Care Services will be closed:

April 19, 2019

May 27, 2019

July 4, 2019

Feedback

We welcome your response! Workforce Solutions Capital Area is committed to bringing quality child care news to the community. If you have comments about this newsletter or suggestions for future topics, please contact Nicole Robinson at nicole.robinson@wfscapitalarea.com or 512.597.7130.



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