

In The Spotlight

Volume 19, No. 2

Spring 2016

Dates to Remember

Meet Your Neighbors
April 2, 2016

Week of the Young Child
April 10–15, 2016

Provider Appreciation Day
May 6, 2016

AALECE Conference
July 13–15, 2016

Celebrate Fun Days

- Pet Day— April 11
- Pajama Day—April 16
- Mothergoose Day—May 1
- Upsy-Daisy Day—June 8
- Summer Begins—June 21
- Frog Jumping Day — May 13



Alabama Launches New 5-Star Rating System for Daycare Centers

A new five-star rating system for Alabama's licensed child care centers is launching this year to help parents determine which daycares are going above and beyond the bare minimum.

"We want to see this program raise the bar on quality of child care programs in the state of Alabama," said Jeanetta Green, assistant director of the child care division of Alabama Department of Human Resources, which is administering the program. "We want to give parents greater access to high quality programs and to make it easier for parents and the community to identify those programs."

The new system is called Alabama Quality STARS, a collaborative effort by Alabama DHR and the University of Alabama. Child care centers that are licensed by DHR can opt in to the program, where trained personnel will assess the centers on a set of criteria and award them between one and five stars.

"The rating system will tell parents that a child care program is doing things above what is required by minimum standards," said Green.

For example, a daycare center with just one star is already going above and beyond what is required by DHR to remain open, ranking it higher than a center with no stars.

The rating criteria include staff qualifications and professional development, management and administrative practices, learning environment and curriculum, and family involvement and community partnerships. DHR plans to provide resources to help centers understand how to meet the STARS standards.

Trained personnel from the University of Alabama will perform evaluations for the STARS system rather than DHR licensing consultants, who perform regular annual evaluations of each child care center.

Centers are not required to participate in the rating system, and Green said there are no plans to make it mandatory," said Green.

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Original article by Anna Claire Vollers, February 02, 2016 at 5:08 PM

http://www.al.com/news/index.ssf/2016/02/alabama_launches_new_5-star_ra.html

The Week of the Young Child™

Celebrating Our Youngest Learners

Looking for some fun activities to celebrate "The Week of the Young Child" in your classroom? Check out these themes on NAEYC's web-page: <http://www.naeyc.org/woyc>

Music Monday April 11, 2016

Sing, dance, celebrate, and learn

Taco Tuesday April 12, 2016

Healthy eating and fitness at home and school

Work Together Wednesday April 13, 2016

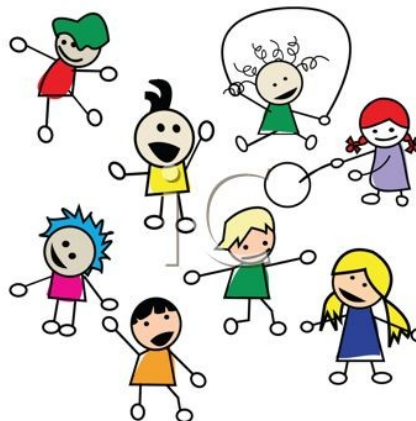
Work together, build together, learn together

Artsy Thursday April 14, 2016

Think, problem solve, create

Family Friday April 15, 2016

Sharing family stories



Celebrating Fun Days

Banana Pudding--Home Made

Ingredients and Items Needed: 3 bananas, 1 1/2 cups of applesauce, 2 teaspoons of lemon juice (have the children squeeze fresh lemons!), paper cups, blender or mixer.

Include the children in making this. Have them help to peel and slice the bananas. Have each child count out 3 slices of banana to put aside for later.

Mix the remaining bananas and all the remaining ingredients into the blender (or a bowl to mix it with an electric mixer). Blend/mix. Scoop out into the paper cups (makes about 6 half cup servings).

The children place their banana slices on top.



MOTHER GOOSE SCIENCE

Here are some suggestions for discovery type activities.

- Study pulleys, like one that Jack used to pull the water bucket up and down.
- Plant a spring flower garden like "Mary, Mary Quite Contrary".
- Experiment with things that sink vs. float, like the "Three Men In A Tub".
- Make Muffins for "Do You Know The Muffin Man".



Shape Pets

Materials Needed: Precut shapes in different colors, crayons and/or markers, glue, construction paper

Encourage the children to use the precut shapes to make the shape of a pet on their large piece of construction paper. They glue the pieces together. Then, using crayons or markers, the children can draw faces on their pets and any other markings they want on their pet.

Be sure to write down their story about their pet as well!

