



# Child Care Mississippi

Volume 1, Issue 2

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## IMPORTANT DATES:

- Kosciusko Mini-Conference: August 1  
Kosciusko, MS
- Hattiesburg Early Childhood Association (HECA) Conference: Sept. 12  
Hattiesburg, MS
- Mississippi Early Childhood Association (MSECA) Conference: Sept. 30-Oct. 2  
Biloxi, MS
- 2009 NAEYC Annual Conference & Expo: Nov. 18-21  
Washington, D.C.

## Rolling Resource Center Gets a New Look



*The Global Education Mobile (GEM) sports a new "wrap" that reflects the mission of the MSCCR&R Network.* Resource Technician Willis Green is happy to be recognized these days. "No one asks me if I'm from CNN anymore!" he shared while giving a tour of the revamped and recently wrapped Global Education Mobile (GEM). Originally it had been used to take technology on the road and was outfitted with several computers to enable rural early care and education providers and parents to access training via the Internet.

Accordingly, the exterior of the GEM depicted a satellite in space with Planet Earth in the background. However, since January of this year, the inside of the GEM has been adapted to be used as a "rolling resource center." From colorful rugs on the floor to infant and toddler toys, the GEM is loaded with materials for check-out.

(See Rolling Resource Center, page 3)

## Nurturing Homes Initiative Brings Best Practices to In-Home Care Providers



*Tonya Pickens teaches a Language Development lesson.*

For almost five years, Tonya Pickens has taken her early childhood expertise on the road, bringing information and materials to in-home child care providers. "When you see children who do not have any materials to experience hands-on learning, it makes you feel wonderful to help enhance their learning styles," she said. "It's like Christmas all throughout the year!" Tonya and her NHI colleagues model appropriate techniques providers can use ranging from storytime, music, and art activities to how to arrange learning environments.

## A Message from Melissa Tenhet, MSCCR&R Network Project Manager

The economy, and its impact on child care programs, is constantly in the news. What better way to help your community members than to point them in the direction of their local Child Care Resource & Referral site?

Need resources? We have loads of materials ranging from board books to children's literature to resources for parents and

teachers. Toys and games for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers -- why buy new when you can check out nearly-new materials for free? Dress-up clothes, puppets, and all kinds of discovery-learning materials will engage the imaginations of the children in your lives.

Need to locate quality child care? Not only can we give you a checklist of factors to consider when selecting a

child care provider, we can give you the names of local providers based on your specific requirements, both center-based and family home care providers.

Need training? We offer free statewide workshops, CEUs, an online Child Development Associate credential, and personalized one-on-one technical assistance. Please call us! 1-866-706-8827



*Project Manager Melissa Tenhet*

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**MSCCR&R Network**  
1-866-706-8827

## Chip Eichelberger Helps MSCCR&R Network "Get Switched On"



*Chip Eichelberger*

Armed with contagious energy, memorable illustrations, and practical ideas, seasoned Certified Speaking Professional Chip Eichelberger spent an afternoon with the MSCCR&R Network staff. His signature program, "Get Switched On," is designed to take organizations and individuals

"from good to great." He delivered by strategizing ways to improve performance while encouraging personal health and wellness. "Time will either promote people or expose them," he observed. "To change my results, I must change and own my daily habits."

To check out Chip's library of articles, such as "Are You Fighting to Be Average?" go to <http://www.getswitchedon.com>, and click on the "Resources" tab.

## NACCRRRA Report: Child Care Costs Continue to Rise Despite Economic Downturn



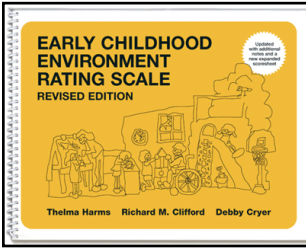
Summer is here, temperatures are rising, and so are the costs of child care. A report released by the National Association of Child

Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRRA) entitled *Parents and the High Price of Child Care: 2009 Update* indicates that in 39 states, the average annual price for child care for an infant in a child care setting was higher than a year's tuition at a four-year public college. Linda Smith, Executive Director of NACCRRRA, fears many

parents are forced to choose affordability over quality. In some cases, providers don't have adequate training in age-appropriate activities, or even health and safety. "I am concerned that as a nation with school readiness as a national goal, there will be long-term implications for the next generation with regard to school success and future success," she said.

Quality child care is an investment in the future. Become an advocate for quality child care by encouraging elected officials to make early childhood education a federal and state funding priority. To read the NACCRRRA report online, go to <http://www.naccrra.org/publications/>

## Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale Authors Come to MSU



Dr. Debby Cryer and Cathy Riley, part of the team that created the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS), spent a week on campus with MSCCR&R Network staff, Child and Family Development Area Agents, and colleagues from the Early Childhood Institute.

The intensive five-day training included four days of field observations at local childcare centers. “It was especially helpful to me to make the visits into the childcare centers and observe the standards and day-to-day operations,” said Area Agent Bettye Wadsworth. “One of the main reasons I attended was to be able to better assist the Center Directors in my district -- I get many calls from them asking for my

assistance in order for them to be more able to comply when their evaluators come to make visits. This week of observation using the ECERS system has made me much more observant.”

The purpose of this training is multi-faceted. Dr. Louise Davis explained: “Proficiency in using the ECERS instrument will enable Training Coordinators and MSCCR&R Network partners to gather standardized data during technical assistance that will indicate areas that need special attention. Pre- and post-assessments will demonstrate progress and help child care centers increase the quality of their services. In our role as the ‘helper piece’ for the Quality Rating System, this will allow us to better serve centers seeking to improve the quality of care they provide by improving their learning environments.”

## 4-H Students Share Children’s Books at Club Congress

At the invitation of Event Facilitator CFD Area Agent Karen Benson, MSCCR&R Network Project Manager Melissa Tehnhet and Area Agent Dr. Rita Tanksley judged the Child Development event at the 4-H Club Congress. As individuals or in groups, students presented classic children’s picture books, reading aloud or acting out the story as if working in an early childhood classroom. Encouraged to use visual

aids, the 4-H members brought an array of engaging props to use.

“I enjoyed meeting some of Mississippi’s finest young people, and seeing what they’ve learned about Child Development,” Melissa said. “We need our state’s brightest and best to pursue early childhood education careers, and 4-H is the perfect place to explore their interests and develop their potential.”



Jenni Brown (second from left) displays a poster she made to donate to a child care center. Pictured with her LeFlore County teammates (left to right): Carrie Brooke Canterbury, Sam Baker, & DeAndrill Smith.

## Rolling Resource Center, from page 1

Thanks to funds generously provided by SPARK and the Mississippi Department of Human Services, Office of Children and Youth, the GEM got a brand-new look that matches its mission. The vinyl “wrap” around the bus depicts a variety of children engaged in fun activities. “Growing Mississippi’s Children,” the GEM’s slogan, reflects the goal of the MSCCR&R Network and its partners in the Nurturing Homes Initiative, as well as local MSU-ES Child & Family Development Area Agents: to help the state’s children grow from birth onward in all areas of development.

Assessment Coordinator Kelly Carmody gets referrals from Training Coordinators in the field, and works with childcare center directors to arrange for the GEM to be

driven from its home on the Holmes Community College campus in Grenada to their centers. “Providers tell me they feel so blessed to be able to come and borrow what we have. They love the toys, books, and games,” Willis said. Following the two-week checkout period, the local Training Coordinator picks up the materials.

Rose Jenkins, a SPARK Local Coordinator shared her impressions of the GEM’s impact: “It is very hard for childcare centers to receive the types of services that you provide and materials are very limited. The childcare staff are not usually able to attend training sessions unless on the weekends. This bus not only gave them contact hours needed but provided materials that could be used within the classroom.”



# MSCCR&R

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[www.childcaremississippi.org](http://www.childcaremississippi.org)

## Free Fun in the Summertime!



*Local child care providers get a contact hour while creating a fun make and take project at MCC. Die-cut shapes were cut to put together a summertime "I Spy" book.*

For many early care and education providers, summer brings more children and a greater range of ages as parents seek child care for kids who are out of school. The MSCCR&R Network sites have something for everyone, including special events! On

June 30th, Meridian Community College's MSCCR&R office held a summer fun event featuring a make and take for one contact hour, refreshments, and door prizes. "We wanted everyone in the community to know we have fabulous resources available for free check-out, and we're open year-round," said Resource Technician Kamilah Dunn. MSU's site held a similar event July 11th at the Child Development and Family Studies Center in Starkville.

## First of Six CDA Students Set to Earn Credential Through Online Program

When Marshetta Little decided to enroll in the online Child Development Associate credential program, she knew it would be tough. She was required to complete all programmatic components in one year: 120 hours of course work, preparation of a Professional Resource File, collection of Parent Opinion Questionnaires, and an observation by an advisor, who completes an assessment of each candidate's teaching capabilities. The final step would be a verification visit from a member of the Council for Professional Recognition. "Working to attain a CDA is very challenging. Being a full-time mom, full-time worker, and studying to do something better for myself was a big challenge. However, when you want better for your kids and your family the sky is the limit," she said.

CDA Advisor Kim Stuart praised Marshetta's dedication: "She worked at a steady pace and used her lunch breaks to work on her material. She worked at home in the evenings and on the weekends. I admire her

motivation." The admiration is mutual: "Mrs. Kim Stuart was great, always there when I needed her. I truly appreciate the director, Mrs. Alma Brown, for giving me this great opportunity," Marshetta said. As for the last component of the program, Marshetta is ready. "I'm excited about meeting with the representative from the Council of Recognition so that my goal will be complete."



*Marshetta Little of West Kemper Kiddie Kollege Preschool in DeKalb.*

As the CDA Advisor, Kim keeps in touch with all of the enrolled students by phone, email, and in-person visits. She reviews their resource materials and writing assignments, and helps them submit all of their paperwork. There are currently six students working with Kim as part of their investment in the CDA Credential Training All-Inclusive package, which includes the 120 hours/12 CEUs of coursework, beginning CDA consultation, mentoring, assistance with CDA submission, and the final observation. Other packages, including online courses for CEU credits, are available. Visit <http://www.nexportsolutions.com/msu/>