



NEWSLETTER SPRING 2010

It is time to start planning for summer for your children. Whether you are making child care plans or just fun plans, the time is now.

- School's Out...Let's Go is a website containing information about summer activities. Check it out at <http://www.schoolsoutletsgo.org/index.html>.
- Fort Vancouver Regional Library is another source of never ending summer fun. For information about summer reading, activities and more go to <http://www.fvrl.org/kids/index.cfm>.
- Learning Avenues Child Care Centers still has summer child care space available. This 40-year old, loving and trusted facility charges for child care on a sliding fee scale. Contact LACCC at <http://learningavenues.com/index.shtml> if you are in need of summer child care. For more information about child care options, contact the Child Care Resource and Referral at (360) 750-9735 or toll free at 1-(800)-282-0874. Online help is available at www.esd112.org/ccfs/.
- Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation is a great source of things to do for the summer. Whether you are interested in formal classes or would like to spend time in parks and green spaces for the summer, visit <http://www.cityofvancouver.us/parks-recreation>. The Discovery Guide is available on Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation's website, featuring parks, trails and VCPR's facilities.
- Dozer Days is May 15 and 16. Don't miss this annual event where kids can have an up close experience with large construction equipment. Go to <http://www.nutterfoundation.org> to learn more about the event and to purchase tickets.

Looking for Kindergartners

SELF was created in 2001 by a handful of people with a dream of creating a county-wide early learning system to build awareness of the importance of investing in young learners and tackling important early learning initiatives. SELF has operated with a collaborative structure since that time.

Over the past year, SELF has been moving toward a non-profit structure by creating bylaws, recruiting board members and preparing SELF partners for the transition. Board recruitment continues with the goal of announcing and introducing the first board members at the June 4 and 5 conference.

SELF is eager to begin a new chapter in its history with a more formal organization that will create a larger system change for early learning.

Structure of SELF is Changing

School districts county wide are in the process of "rounding up" or identifying children who will be entering kindergarten fall 2010. This process is important for districts because it is a measurement for the number of kindergarten students that will be attending in the fall. It also gives districts a chance to plan and prepare for any influx of new students and budget for a growing number of new students.

If you or anyone you know has an incoming kindergartner, please contact your local school as soon as possible to enroll your student. Many schools have open houses or other activities for new students and families to help integrate early learners into a school structure. If you need information about what school district you reside in, go to http://www.smerc.org/schooldistricts/clark_county.html to locate your district.

SELF's "Through the Eyes of a Child" Conference

**"Through the Eyes of a Child" Fundraising Breakfast and Conference
June 4th & 5th**

Vancouver Hilton Hotel, 301 West 6th Street, Vancouver, Washington 98660

The 2010 SELF conference has been created "through a child's eyes." How do children view the world, what do they need and what do they think about? The breakfast and conference were designed with these questions in mind.

The two day event will start with a fundraising breakfast that will benefit SELF/Clark County Early Learning Fund, in honor of Rick and Sarah Melching. The keynote speaker for the breakfast is author, speaker and family therapist, Robin Karr-Morse. Robin co-authored the book *Ghosts from the Nursery: "Tracing the Roots of Violence"* and currently is finishing her latest book *"Monster in the Closet"* due in bookstores this fall.

Monster in the Closet examines the connection between the impact of fear experienced chronically in early childhood and the soaring rate of physical illness in adulthood, as well as emotional and behavioral illness and addiction. Robin will talk about new research and the relationship between our brains, immune and endocrine systems.

Immediately after breakfast, the first track of the conference will kick off with "Do You Know Who I Am?" This track is presented by John-Paul Chaisson Cardenas, State Director of Equity and Civil Rights at the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). John-Paul will present a deeper look into cultural communities and strategies for reaching children and families in these communities.

The second track on Friday will feature "Where Do I Play," presented by Laurie Cornelius, Director of Children and Family Services at Clark College. Laurie is passionate about play in developing young minds, leading to creativity, innovation and investigation.

On Saturday, the conference is scheduled for a half day and is entitled, "Why Do I Feel This Way? You Can Help Me." Julie Rosenzweig, Professor of Social Work at Portland State University, will present a two-part track that will address emotional development, brain development and health of a child relating to early learning experiences. The second half of the track will focus on ways professionals and families can help a child recover after trauma by learning strategies and coping skills.

You won't want to miss the breakfast and conference. Space is limited. Go to selfwa.org for registration and to learn more about the speakers, schedule and the work of SELF.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE CONFERENCE: Through the Eyes of a Child Conference is a great way to receive STARS and Clock hours. Register at selfwa.org.

Clark County Provides Input on Washington State's Early Learning Plan

Throughout last summer and fall of 2009, many partners in early learning, community members and stakeholders drafted a statewide early learning plan that would ensure that young children in Washington are successful and have a healthy start in life. The purpose of this plan is to provide a blueprint that will support a statewide early learning policy and funding strategy. The plan will be implemented in the fall of 2010.

The Department of Early Learning, along with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and Thrive by Five asked coalitions in every county to help disperse the draft plan and collect feedback in order to refine the plan. Counties statewide are collecting data and feedback that will be sent back to the creators of the plan for revision and alignment.

SELF recently conducted a community forum with parents, providers, and professionals in early learning and community agencies to talk about the plan as it relates to Clark County. Some of the feedback included a need for policy change that would allow continuity and consistency across systems. A grandmother shared that her grandchild fell behind in kindergarten during a move to another school because the curriculum was completely different. An administrator from the K-12 school system expressed a need to collaborate with families to have the school relationship early, find ways to allow kids to access resources earlier and extend the K-12 system. A child care provider expressed concerns that the state will ask for more requirements from in home child care providers, which in turn would take time and resources.

What do you think? If you are interested in looking at the plan and sharing feedback go to www.del.wa.gov/plan. Feedback must be received by June 18, 2010.