

Pathways to Quality

For Early Childhood Professionals
in Southwest Ohio, the Miami Valley & Northern Kentucky



4C celebrates with 2008 CDA graduates

This summer 4C honored 42 graduates from Child Development Associate programs in Southwest Ohio. These groups completed the 4C CDA programs held at the 4C Central office, Santa Maria Community Services in Price Hill and Child Focus in Clermont County. The 4C CDA programs work in collaboration with local universities to offer early childhood teachers and providers an opportunity to earn a professional credential and college credit in early childhood education. (See page 6 for scholarship information.)

4C recognizes each CDA class with special graduation celebrations at the completion of the year-long program.

“These celebrations were well-deserved after a year of intensive early childhood development and curriculum study,” says Julie Witten, coordinator of the 4C Institute for Early Childhood Excellence. “We congratulate all graduates for their hard work and commitment to children and families.”

Since the program’s beginning, more than 200 individuals in Southwest Ohio have com-



4C celebrated with the first CDA graduating class from the 4C Clermont County location. Standing from left: Jane Holtgreffe (4C CDA instructor), Karen Barras, Debra Ream, Michelle Hall, Stephanie Lentz, Paula Gibson and Cyndi Cappel (4C CDA instructor). Seated from left: Bethany Moeller, Barbara Hattar, Kathi Cadigan, Ruth Cusick and Julie Kelly.

pleted the CDA program and many have continued on to take additional college courses.

Any graduate of the 4C Southwest Ohio CDA program who is interested in continued college courses, scholarships or support in renewing or applying for a CDA, can contact Julie Witten at jwitten@4cforchildren.org.

In This Issue

- Northern Kentucky office has new location
- ‘Star Celebrations’ recognize star-rated programs
- 4C to lead effort to prevent child abuse



...for Children

Our mission: to improve the quality, effectiveness and accessibility of early childhood education and care in the region so every child has a positive experience and a foundation for success in school and life.

New options launched for providers: online workshop registration and ‘e-Pathways’

Two new online options for providers were launched by 4C this summer. Both are intended to help 4C better serve the needs of providers.

Starting July 1, a new section of the 4C Web site makes it possible to sign up and pay for all 4C classes online. This new online catalogue includes all courses found in the printed *Professional Development Opportunities* catalogue.

To visit the online catalogue, select “Workshops” from the left-

hand menu bar on the 4C homepage (www.4CforChildren.org).

July also marked the launch of *e-Pathways*, an electronic companion to 4C’s print newsletter, *Pathways to Quality*. This e-newsletter is distributed to all providers in 4C’s service areas twice a month.

It contains “Workshop Alerts” by region (Southwest Ohio, Miami Valley, Northern Kentucky). These alerts notify providers of any changes in scheduled

workshops. This section also contains reminders of upcoming professional development opportunities with a link to a full description of the workshops on the 4C online catalogue and online registration.

In addition, each issue has a section of “4C News” as well as “Tips for Providers.”

To view previous editions of *e-Pathways*, visit the 4C Web site “What’s New” section.

4C Northern Kentucky has a new location

The 4C Northern Kentucky staff moved from their Fort Thomas location to a new office and training center on Aug. 1. The new location—601 Washington Ave., Suite 105—is easily accessible from I-471, just south of Newport on the Levee in Watertower Square and across the street from Pompilio's.

The new location has the same services, same hours and same phone numbers.

“There is plenty of free parking and a larger, more accommodating professional development space,” says 4C Northern Kentucky director, Laura Heuser. “We encourage everyone to stop by,” she adds.

The Northern Kentucky office has seen an increase in the number of parent walk-ins due to the convenient location inside a building with multiple nonprofits and social service organizations. The Watertower Square houses the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services and the Brighton Center, among others.



4C Northern Kentucky staff (from left)—Joni Collins, Laura Heuser, Diann Forbes, Natasha Bigl and Jillian Ruther—in front of 4C's new, improved office space in the Watertower Square in Newport.

A state star-rating proves to be rewarding

Janet Baltzersen from The Children's Center at the College of Mount St. Joseph achieved a star-rating this year through Ohio's Step Up To Quality with assistance from 4C. This is how she describes her “rewarding” experience:

Dear 4C,

As you know, we have achieved our first star-rating at the center, and we recently received our award money. I am so grateful to everyone involved in this process, and it has been an amazing experience for my staff and me.

This process helped me to put systems in place that I should have done long ago. I always found an excuse, or was busy with day-to-day operations, and I never took the time to devote to long-term planning and assessment.

The on-site visits were so helpful to my staff. Having an objective observation and professional advice is invaluable. To be then given the funds to

purchase the items you need to have a quality program was extremely rewarding.

I purchased our classroom supports over the summer. The teachers were so excited to begin the school year with new educational toys and resources.

Also, what a difference it makes during the day! The children are so engaged and excited to be in the classrooms. There are fewer discipline problems because the children have so much to do!



Janet Baltzersen (far right) stands with students and staff during a 4C Star Celebration to recognize their new star rating through Ohio's Step Up To Quality program.

Thank you again to all involved! Your hard work and dedication have really paid off. How wonderful that early education is finally getting some recognition!

Janet Baltzersen,
The Children's Center,
College of Mount
St. Joseph

To find out how your program can become involved in Step Up To Quality, call Kim Ginn at 513-758-1220.

4C to lead Cincinnati effort to prevent child abuse, neglect

Family and Children First Council awards \$493K to strengthen families through early education

4C, Centerpoint Health and The Children's Home of Cincinnati, three organizations within The Consortium for Resilient Young Children, will partner with Santa Maria Community Services to bring a new child abuse and neglect prevention approach to Cincinnati's Westwood neighborhood. The Consortium was awarded \$493,000 from the Hamilton County Family and Children First Council.

The two-year initiative will provide coaching and specialized training to child care centers and family child care providers to help them identify early signs of neglect or abuse, and to link families to prevention resources.

4C will serve as the project's coordinating and fiscal agent and provide administrative oversight.

This initiative was developed by The Consortium for Resilient Young Children, a collaboration of mental health and early care and education specialists in Cincinnati. It is based on an educational approach developed by The Center for the Study of Social Policy. Similar projects are appearing nationwide.

The Center for the Study of Social Policy linked research about preventing child abuse and neglect with knowledge about quality early care and education to develop a conceptual framework for a "Strengthening Families" approach. The concept involves building five "protective factors" around young children including parental resilience, social connections, knowledge of parenting and child development, concrete support in times of need and children's social and emotional development.

The effort in Westwood will provide coaching and specialized training for child care centers and family child care providers, along with bi-weekly coaching sessions, workshops and networking opportunities. It will also include developing and supporting a community coalition and strategic

plan to prevent child abuse and neglect, launching a public awareness campaign and increasing child abuse and neglect-prevention service resources by June, 2010.

"These community partners have the perfect combination of expertise ranging from community organization to early childhood education and children's social and emotional development," says Sallie Westheimer, 4C executive director, and the approach has been tested. "Child care providers in other cities sing the praises of this approach to support families as they raise children in a stressful world," she adds.

For more information contact Carolyn Brinkmann at Cbrinkmann@4CforChildren.org.

4C to honor 'Champions for Children' at fourth annual gala, Jan. 24, 2009

Jim Schwab, Merri Gaither Smith and The Sara M. and Michelle Vance Waddell Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation will be honored Jan. 24, 2009, at 4C's fourth annual Champions for Children Gala at the Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza.

"Our community is fortunate to have these dedicated champions for children," says Sallie Westheimer, 4C executive director. By turning the spotlight on these individuals, 4C hopes to inspire others to step up to the continuing challenge of ensuring quality, effective and accessible early childhood education.

For more information about these Champions for Children, visit the 4C Web site.

For information about tickets or sponsorships, call Karen Hurley, 513-758-1201.

4C helps providers with Kentucky's new state regulations

The 4C Northern Kentucky staff are playing a critical role helping providers make necessary changes to meet new state licensing requirements.

The new regulations were a direct result of the 2007 report from The National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies that ranked Kentucky at the bottom regarding quality child care programs. The new child care licensing regulations went

into effect July 1. Enforcement began in October.

The Northern Kentucky office has seen an increase of provider calls and workshop participants due to the new requirements, reports Laura Heuser, director of 4C Northern Kentucky.

More providers are calling upon 4C staff for support with implementing changes in their programs. Directors also need support developing the

newly required professional development plans for child care staff. And the increased number of training hours now required has brought participants to 4C workshops.

4C is available to help providers meet new regulation requirements with on-site visits or through specialized workshops. All training held at 4C Northern Kentucky is tailored to address the updated rules.

4C News Briefs

► 2009 editions of free 'Guide to Early Care & Learning' coming soon

The 2009 editions of *Ohio's Guide to Early Care & Learning* will be available later this fall for parents throughout 4C's three regions—including, for the first time—the Miami Valley.

The Southwest Ohio edition will have a special section with Kentucky information and resources for the Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky area.

The guides include comprehensive listings of early care and education options in all three regions. Coordinated by the Ohio Child Care Resource & Referral Association and 4C, the guide is available in local grocery stores, pediatrician offices and all 4C locations.



A Miami Valley edition is available for first time this year.

► Ohio reaches Step Up To Quality goal

In June, the State of Ohio reported 452 star-rated programs in Ohio through Step Up To Quality, surpassing Governor Strickland's goal of 450 star-rated programs by June 30, 2008. The next goal is to reach 800 star-rated programs in Ohio by June 30, 2009.

► Ads for STARS for KIDS NOW riding Kentucky buses

With funding from the Kenton/Campbell County Community Early Childhood Council, ads are appearing on the sides of the Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky (TANK) buses to urge parents to contact 4C for information about the STARS for KIDS NOW quality-rating system. These ratings can help parents identify levels of quality when searching for child care in Kentucky.

► 4C Miami Valley staff tackles Spanish to better serve growing Hispanic population

4C Miami Valley staff are taking an extra step to serve the growing number of Hispanic parents and providers in the Dayton area by taking conversational Spanish classes. Marcia Beachler, Diane Johnson, Patti Nelson and Donna O'Neill all regularly attend the free classes offered as a community service from Sinclair College to 4C and other agencies sharing a building in Dayton. "We are taking the classes to be better prepared to serve families and providers in our area—and also just because it's fun!" says O'Neill.

► 4C Miami Valley reaches 'informal' care providers

4C Miami Valley received a grant in June from United Way of Greater Dayton for a Family, Friend and Neighbor Care Program to reach out to individuals who care for children in their homes on an informal basis. The main goal is to help children in informal settings be better prepared for Kindergarten by helping providers create educational environments. Many of the activities and educational materials are from the United Way Born Learning™ initiative.

Child care crisis? Parent Services 'task force' is here to help!

The 4C Parent Services team has been called upon in several child care crisis situations this year when parents needed a quick solution for unexpected program closings. In this type of situation, 4C has a new "task force" who can quickly respond to help parents.

In September, when an after-school program planned to close, the area manager called 4C for assistance. The 4C Parent Service team quickly sent over materials to help the parents locate program options in the area and visited with parents on-site.

"All of the parents expressed great appreciation in having a place to turn to for help finding child care in a time of stress," says Jamie Hogan, 4C family outreach specialist. "One parent said she didn't know what to do, but had hope now that someone was willing to help her."

4C staff met with parents, collected contact information and conducted child care searches for each family. They then followed up with parents with the results and called programs to find vacancies.

After another recent program closing this summer, one father expressed his gratitude toward 4C. "4C is invaluable. The parent counselor I worked with, Sara Willinger, helped me tremendously through a very difficult situation. I have nothing but good things to say about 4C."

'Leading on Purpose' theme of 4C Leadership Conference

4C hosted its sixth annual 4C Leadership Conference Oct. 2-3 at the Savannah Center at Chappell Crossing in West Chester, Ohio. The conference, "Leading on Purpose," featured keynote speaker Holly Elissa Bruno, an author, teacher and speaker on early childhood education leadership. Directors, administrators and owners of child care programs participated in two days of activities and workshops designed around becoming a stronger leader.

Bruno emphasized that leading on purpose requires people to clarify their "evolving mission" and "rediscover core values." Also, as people grow and their lives change, they need to "take a sounding" on what they stand for.

"Leaders of early childhood programs have challenging and tiring jobs," says Janet Keller, 4C director of professional development. "Our goal for the conference each year is to provide an



Holly Elissa Bruno (far right), the keynote speaker at the 2008 4C Leadership Conference, leads a singing finale to remind leaders in early education to "Stop in the Name of Love" when they have conflicts with other adults in their programs. "Always think of children first," she told providers, as their behaviors and interactions with each other in a child's environment leave a lasting impact.

opportunity for them to take time to rejuvenate and learn new ways to improve their programs."

More than 65 participants registered

to attend the pre-conference on Oct. 2, and more than 180 for the conference on Oct. 3, setting a 4C Leadership Conference attendance record.

4C recognizes star-ratings with 'Star Celebrations'



4C hosted a 'Star Celebration' at the Clermont YMCA New Beginnings Child Development Center in Clermont County in August. This program was the first Emerging Star to earn a star in Ohio's Step Up To Quality program in Clermont County. Kim Ginn, 4C Step Up To Quality Coordinator (far right) reports that Tracy Sparrow, the program administrator (sixth from right) worked very hard to become a quality-rated program.

Want to learn more about becoming star-rated?

General information about the Step Up To Quality program in Ohio and STARS for KIDS NOW in Kentucky are on the 4C Web site, www.4CforChildren.org.

Step Up To Quality
www.StepUpToQuality.org

STARS for KIDS NOW
www.Kentuckypartnership.org

Attention providers: Scholarships are available!

In Ohio: T.E.A.C.H Scholarships

This Ohio program provides scholarships to teachers and family child care providers to earn degrees and credentials in early childhood education. Its goal is to address three of the major issues in the early childhood field: education, compensation and turnover.

For more information, visit www.OCCRRA.org.

In Kentucky: KIDS Now Early Childhood Scholarships

This Kentucky program provides scholarships to child care providers to earn a variety of degrees and credentials in early childhood education. Scholars can attend approved training at 4C or at technical colleges, universities or other organizations in the Kentucky community.

For more information, visit www.kentuckypartnership.org.



Pathways to Quality is published quarterly.

4C invites comments, guest editorials, agency news and program updates.

Sallie Westheimer
Executive Director

Elaine L. Ward
Chief Operating Officer

Karen Hurley
Director of Development

Amy Gorga
Communications Coordinator

www.4CforChildren.org
513-221-0033 Southwest Ohio
859-781-3511 Northern Kentucky
937-220-9660 Miami Valley



1924 Dana Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio 45207

513.221.0033
www.4CforChildren.org

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 5182
CINCINNATI, OHIO



A United Way agency partner funded in part by the City of Cincinnati, Ohio Department of Job & Family Services, The Ohio Department of Education, and the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services.

4C provides quality training in Southwest Ohio, the Miami Valley and Northern Kentucky.