



THE P.E.P. POST

PROVIDERS EMPOWERING PROVIDERS

Put a Little PEP in Your Step!

October/November 2011

"PEP Talks" for Family Child Care

Regional Coordinators across the state have been working hard on the first round of PEP Regional Conferences entitled, "PEP Talks" for Family Child Care. To date, 5 of the 6 scheduled conferences have been held over the last six months.

Region 3 was the first to host their conference. "It Takes a Village" was held on June 11th at the Parkway Plaza in Casper. Saratoga was the home of the combined Region 1 and Region 4 conference at the end of August with the name "All About Babies." Region 2 hosted "Fall into Fun with Family Child Care" on October 8th in Douglas. Quickly following was "Whooo Deserves Better Than You" in Cody on October 22nd and "Learn, Laugh and Grow in Family Child Care" in Lander on November 5th.

Each conference included a wide variety of training topics including: Infant Mental Health and Brain Development, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, Feeding Children the Old Fashioned Way, How to Create a Natural Outdoor Play Environment, Embracing Culture and Diversity in Your Early Childhood Setting, Back to Nature Outdoor Playscapes, and SIDS: The Facts.

Plans are underway for our last conference for this session. It will be held in Gillette in January or February. Check our website at www.providersempoweringproviders.com for complete details as they become available.

Providers Empowering Providers Membership Survey Results 2011

Recently PEP members received an online survey so that we could see how we are doing. The survey consisted of 10 questions.

- * What is your role with PEP?
- * Do you regularly attend PEP meetings or trainings?
- * What do you find most valuable about PEP membership?
- * Additional comments?
- * Has PEP provided you with the benefits you thought it would?
- * If no, what did you expect and not receive?
- * What one thing would improve PEP the most?
- * How did you hear about PEP?
- * Have you visited the PEP website?

While members shared that they see value in PEP including quality trainings and networking opportunities, they also shared that we can do a better job of communicating with members and developing local training and networking opportunities.

We listened and are currently working on ways to streamline communication to be more effective and timely along with developing ways to bring more trainings and networking opportunities to the communities throughout Wyoming.

PEP is a project of Wyoming Children's Action Alliance with funding from the Department of Family Services and the Department of Workforce Services

The Structure of PEP by Rose Kor

The structure of Providers Empowering Providers really begins with a question. Why was PEP created? PEP is to develop and implement a network for Family Child Care Center (FCCC) and Family Child Care Home (FCCH) providers. The purpose of the network is to develop leadership skills in this population that will increase the number of successful quality child care programs available to children in Wyoming.

In the first year, PEP built the framework for network. A state coordinator was identified and regional coordinators gathered and some local groups formed. Much like the construction of a house, once the basement is poured and the two-by-fours are in place the much longer process of closing in the structure and finishing it begins.

This is the phase that PEP is now entering. In the past 18 months we have laid, the foundation put the frame in place. Now PEP has begun the work of the increasing the local group base and local connections. These person-to-person connections are the means by which home child care providers can exchange and gain knowledge and skills and grow professionally. The local group connections are the interior walls that finish our building and make it functional.

Two sources fund this work. The first is a contract with the Department of Family Services and the Wyoming Children's Action Alliance (WCAA) for the Statewide Training and Resource Services (STARS) project. One element of this contract asks WCAA to help create a comprehensive system of professional development for licensed child care providers. PEP is to provide training, support and networking to help home providers combat isolation, burnout and successfully operate quality child care program. The project must demonstrate that it is building local groups and developing and coordinating training relevant to family child care providers.

The funding from this source is focused primarily on infra-structure development for the network which includes a part-time state coordinator, training and travel for regional coordinators who are charged with local group development. This funding stream will support network development through September 30, 2012. WCAA may have the opportunity to request continued funding for next biennium.

The second major support flow for PEP is from the Department of Workforce Services, Wyoming Quality Counts program focused on supporting training at the local level to engage local providers in quality training events. This includes Parent Play Date events,

regional conferences for PEP members provided near where they live and a planned statewide conference for providers on professionalism in home child care. This funding stream will support training work through June 30, 2012. It is unclear at this time if funding from DWS will be available following that date.

Both funding streams support the dedicated time from several staff members at WCAA to provide support for PEP including supervision of the project, processing payment for expenses for the work and help in accomplishing the work as well as reporting to the funding agencies on progress and how their investment is benefiting home child care providers in Wyoming.



Regional Changes

The position of Regional Coordinator for Region 5 is currently vacant due to the resignation of Cathy Janish. We wish Cathy all the best and want to thank her for her hard work and dedication to PEP.

Region 6 has undergone changes as well. In order to more effectively streamline communication and operations we will no longer have 2 Regional Coordinators in Park County. All questions and inquiries should be made to Kim Sweet. Kim can be reached by phone at 754-0562 or by email at ksweet@bresnan.net.

PEP Provider Spotlight

Each newsletter we will be spotlighting a PEP provider.

This issue's provider is Yvonne Fairbanks from Casper.

Yvonne is the owner of Lil' MikiZoo Daycare.

Her philosophy:

All children should be treated equally but at the same time as an individual. They learn in different ways and at different speeds. It is important that each child have the opportunity to learn in their individualized ways but be loved and cared for the same. Despite the differences each child may have, they all require the same things to have a fun, loving and fun-filled start to their educational future. When caring for a child or a classroom full of children the whole child is where we as early childhood educators need focus in order to set every child up for success.

Why Yvonne joined PEP:

I joined PEP recently. I did it because PEP is a network of home providers. This network has become a life saver in everything from just connecting to others in the same field to the learning opportunities for myself personally that they have to offer. Having this career can be the hardest thing and yet the most rewarding but doing it alone can be very hard at times. Having the PEP community has given me that connection I need to know I am not the only one out there having this problem or having those rewarding moments. Here in PEP I can share with others who understand and connect with them and have a lifetime friendship with many.

Coming Soon . . .

Watch for the announcement on the new PEP Coaching Program.