



Early Childhood Coordinating Council

Communicator



December 2012

We are Idahoans who want to make a difference for Idaho's Kids!

VISION:

All Idaho's children grow up healthy, safe and nurtured by their families, with quality learning opportunities, and are able to reach their fullest potential supported by inclusive community services.

MISSION:

Provide leadership and education, and coordinate resources for Idaho's young children and their families.



Join us on [Facebook](#) and follow our monthly theme!

What did the EC3 Learn?

The Early Childhood Coordinating Council held their quarterly meeting on November 8 & 9. The theme for this meeting was Mental Health. Furthermore, the focus was not only on infant and early childhood mental health, but how adult mental health issues affect children.

Maternal Depression:

Judy Cross, a registered nurse at St. Luke's Regional Medical Center in Boise, came to present to the Council on maternal depression and the effects that it can have on children even before they are born. Nurse Judy explained that untreated depression in expectant moms causes chemical changes in mom's brain that can negatively affect their babies in utero. Maternal depression can negatively affect a child throughout their life. Postpartum depression is the number one complication from childbirth, and screening tools are available for detection and referral for treatment. To learn more contact [Nurse Judy](#).

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health:

Carrie Mori, an Occupational Therapist at St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center, and endorsed in Infant Mental Health, presented to the Council about the importance of a nurturing and fulfilling environment for infants and young children. Mori was specific about how the absence of this environment negatively impacts a child's developing brain. To learn more about infant and early childhood mental health visit [AimEarly Idaho](#).

Neurobehavioral Health:

Dr. Jeffrey Hall, PhD and James Carpenter, LMSW presented on the treatment options of mental health at [Northwest Neurobehavioral Health, LLC](#) (NNH), located in the Boise, Idaho area. NNH offers services for children, as young as 18 months through the end of life, in screening for neurological disorders in a variety of disciplines. In addition to screening for disorders NNH provides treatment and intervention services for patients. The clinic also provides services for family members of patients to help them cope with the stress of having a family member with a mental illness.

Happiest of Babies:

Sherry Iverson, R.N. provided a brief overview of the training for [The Happiest Baby on the Block](#); additionally she provided a background to the Shaken Baby Syndrome prevention programs currently employed in Idaho. The Happiest Baby on the Block is a program developed by Dr. Harvey Karp and teaches new parents and professionals how to calm crying babies using the [Five S's](#) of the program. To find Happiest Baby classes follow the link.

Healthy Moms, Happy Babies:

The development of young children can be affected by many different forms of stimuli. Because domestic violence is one form of negative impact, Melissa Ruth and Laura Alfani presented the [Healthy Moms, Happy Babies](#) training now being offered to the staff of the new Maternal Child Home Visiting program. The training was developed by [Futures Without Violence](#) and provides trainees with the tools they need to identify and assist victims of domestic violence. The Council received a brief overview of the training objectives and watched a video that described how domestic violence can negatively impact children as they develop. To learn more about training for [Healthy Moms, Happy Babies](#) visit the [Idaho Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence](#).

"A snowflake is a winter's butterfly" ~ Hero Arts





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Early Years 2012 was a huge success!

Over 300 attendees came together for two days in November to share best practices and new approaches addressing early childhood challenges. Inspiring speakers and presenters offered an array of exciting presentations that highlighted the many interrelated aspects of growth that impact young children and families. The keynote speakers addressed many topics that focused on the importance of helping children develop their cognitive, emotional, social and physical skills. The conference provided education essential to strengthening and supporting families with young children. Cheers to another great Early Years!



Early Childhood SPOTLIGHT!

The Early Childhood Coordinating Council will be taking some time in each edition of the Communicator to recognize an individual who is a major player in the world of Early Childhood in Idaho.



For this edition Dr. Noreen Womack, MD is in the Spotlight. Dr. Womack is a pediatrician in the Treasure Valley and she recently wrote and received a grant entitled, *Building Bridges Among Health & Early Childhood Systems*. The purpose of the grant is to strengthen the connections between health and different programs that serve Idaho's young children and their families. Congratulations Dr. Womack on your grant and best wishes for a successful grant cycle.

Spreading Good Cheer!

The Toys for Tots Program, which is sponsored by the United States Marine Corps, provides toys to underprivileged children who may not have any gifts this holiday season. To find a toy drop location or to donate to Toys for Tots visit their website.



Conferences!

Eastern Idaho AEYC will be hosting *Make a Joyful Noise* on April 26 and 27, 2013 at Idaho State University in Pocatello. The conference will feature Jim Gill. If you missed him at Early Years here's another chance to see his wonderful work. For more information contact [Judy Boren](#) or watch [Jim Gill's website](#) for tour dates and times.

Happy Holidays!

With the holidays around the corner gifts for young children is a familiar topic. The Early Childhood Coordinating Council, with the help of partners, has developed a list of the 10 Toys Every Child Should Have.

1. Pots/pans/spoons/measuring cups/make your own drum
2. Shakers (place items in a plastic container and seal)
3. Push, pull & load (laundry basket, box)
4. Stack & sort (plastic tubs, egg cartons)
5. Toys for water play (plastic cups)
6. A blanket
7. Crayons
8. Ball (large lightweight)
9. Play-dough
10. Books to read over and over again



remember to choose items that do not pose a health or choking hazard, or could be unsafe in any other way! To learn more about safe toys click the [nutcracker!](#)

So Many Holidays!

The Early Childhood Coordinating Council would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone that there many holidays during the winter months. The Council promotes sharing information with young children about holidays they do and do not celebrate at home. To learn about the holidays click on the name of the holiday to go to an informative website!

[Kwanzaa](#) December 26-January 1

[Hanukkah](#) December 8-December 16

[Christmas](#) December 25

[Chinese New Year](#) February 10

Teaching young children about holidays around the world will help them prepare for human differences before they enter school. No matter the holiday, enjoy the snow!

Let it Snow! Let it Snow! Let it Snow!

With the cold weather creeping into Idaho there are a lot of outdoor activities that are not safe and too cold for young children. There are, however, so many fun activities that are safe and keep little noses warm! Click the [Snowman](#) to learn more about fun indoor activities for kids. But remember that catching snowflakes on your tongue can be the best part of winter!



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If you have an event you would like to announce in the Communicator contact Council staff.