

Winter 2016



CARE NEWS

A Non-profit Organization Dedicated to Improving the Lives of Children of All Abilities

www.careforchildren.info

Early Learning Program Adds STEM Class



Alexis Close, CARE preschool teacher, leads a small group activity during a recent STEM Class. Students brainstormed how to build a sturdy bridge and used different materials to test strength.

Through a partnership with the Bradford Area School District and *Race to the Top* grant funding, CARE for Children is offering STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) programming for four year-olds in Rainbow Corner Preschool.

Students have the opportunity to participate in specially designed lessons which directly relate to the Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood Education and concentrate on Mathematical Thinking and Expression, Scientific Thinking and Technology, and Creative Thinking and Expression.

CARE's STEM class meets weekly as an extension of the preschool day and is taught by Kimberly Engstrom, M.Ed., preschool director, and Alexis Close, M.Ed., preschool teacher. There are sixteen students participating in the class.

"It's never too early to begin STEM education," said Engstrom. "Our STEM lessons are helping the preschoolers explore, observe, ask questions, predict outcomes, and integrate learning by participating in fun hands-on activities in the classroom."

The students in CARE's STEM class have had a chance to incorporate engineering by building bridges out of a variety of materials to experiment with strength; explore how animals stay warm in arctic climates; and learn basic geometry concepts by making 3-dimensional shapes out of gumdrops and toothpicks.

"Children are naturally curious about the world around them," said Close. "It is very rewarding to watch their excitement each week as they learn new skills and interests, not only preparing them for Kindergarten but for their school years and later in life."

Looking ahead, Engstrom and Close are planning a "Make It and Take It" program for parents to attend. Students will have a chance to demonstrate a STEM activity and share a learning experience with their families. They also plan to incorporate the playground as an outdoor classroom in the spring. The STEM class will be planting a garden which will incorporate science and nature concepts.

At left: Kimberly Engstrom, CARE preschool director, demonstrates an activity on insulation as part of a STEM lesson on animals in arctic climates. Preschool student Garrett tested the use of a plastic bag and shortening to provide insulation in ice water.

At right: Preschoolers Aurora, Cooper, Ryan, and Maddelina participate in an experiment to make snow with baking soda and shaving cream. The students discussed similarities and differences to real snow.



Save the Date - Preschool Registration

Rainbow Corner Preschool registration for 2016-2017 begins March 21st for current students and March 28th for new students.

CARE for CHILDREN EMPLOYEES “MAKE A DIFFERENCE”

BOARD HONORS EMPLOYEES FOR YEARS of SERVICE

The Annual Meeting of the CARE for Children Board of Directors was held Thursday, December 3rd at the Bradford Club. The CARE Board of Directors, for the first time, honored all employees who have reached milestone years of service at the organization.

Karen Gelston, board president, noted, “The board is pleased to recognize the contributions of staff members who have reached organizational milestones and the work of the entire staff. They work hard to ensure we meet the mandate of our mission – to improve the lives of children of all abilities.”

Greg Booth, board vice president, recognized employees, including Kimberly Engstrom, M.Ed., preschool director, for her 15 years of service. During her tenure at CARE, Engstrom has worked to build the early learning program into a high quality, progressive program that meets the needs of typical children and children with delays and disabilities.

Other staff reaching milestones included: 10 plus years -

DeAnn Persichini, COTA/L, Occupational Therapy Assistant; Janice Stiles, Preschool Aide; Valorie Coast, Finance and Office Manager; Tina M. Martin, Executive Director; and 5 plus years – Kimberly Miller, OTR/L, Occupational Therapist; Dana Pence, PT, Physical Therapist; Barbara McGarry, Preschool Aide; and Ashley Carlson, MOT, OTR/L, Pediatric Therapy Services Director.



From left to right: CARE employees Barbara McGarry; Janice Stiles; CARE Board Vice President, Greg Booth; DeAnn Persichini; CARE Board President, Karen Gelston; Kimberly Engstrom; CARE Executive Director, Tina Martin; Valorie Coast; Ashley Carlson; and Dana Pence are recognized for milestone years of service.

SENECA RESOURCES DONATES \$2,000 for CO DETECTOR PROGRAM

Seneca Resources, the exploration and production segment of National Fuel Gas Company, has donated \$2,000 to CARE for Children in support of the non-profit organization’s Child Safety and Injury Prevention program.

“We are very grateful for the support we have received from Seneca Resources,” said Tina Martin, executive director at CARE. “This gift will help us launch a carbon monoxide detector program for families in need and help educate families about the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning.”

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a gas that you cannot see, taste or smell. Carbon monoxide poisoning can result from faulty furnaces or other heating appliances, portable generators, clothes dryers, water heaters, or cars left running in garages. Each year, 184 children in the United States die due to carbon monoxide poisoning and more than 20,000 children visit the emergency room (Safe Kids Worldwide).

CARE’s carbon monoxide detector program aims to provide a free detector and safety information to families who meet the following guidelines: McKean County residents with one or more children in the home; financial need; and they must participate in a short survey at least thirty days after receipt of the carbon monoxide detector. To be eligible for the program, all guidelines must be met.



From left to right: CARE Social Worker, Chris Gibble, LCSW, with CARE Speech-Language Pathologist, Kylie Atteberry, CCC-SLP and son Griffin, look on as Chris Spaich and Chris Salerno from the Bradford City Fire Department demonstrate the proper placement of lifesaving carbon monoxide detectors.

For more information on the carbon monoxide detector program, please contact CARE for Children at 814-362-4621 or visit www.careforchildren.info. CARE for Children, the lead agency for Safe Kids Pennsylvania – McKean County Partner, aims to promote the prevention of childhood injuries in McKean County through education, collaboration and advocacy.

Seneca Resources Corporation, the exploration and production segment of National Fuel Gas Company, explores for, develops, and purchases national gas and oil reserves in California and Appalachia. Additional information about Seneca and National Fuel Gas Company is available at <http://nationalfuelgas.com>.

THERAPEUTIC RECREATION PROGRAM OFFERS A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES

In October, CARE began its 3rd session of the CARE Trailblazers. The Trailblazers is an adaptive sports team for children who may have difficulty competing on a traditional team. The fall session focused on soccer with 6 weeks of practice and a scrimmage with the Bradford Area High School Boys and Girls Owls Soccer Teams.

In November, CARE held its annual holiday movie celebration for its families with a private showing of "The Peanuts Movie" at the Main Street Movie House in Bradford. Each year an anonymous sponsor provides admission to the movie, popcorn, juice and water for all in attendance. This year's movie was attended by 162 children and adults.

In December, CARE held a cookie baking and bingo night at the Ashley Booth Griffin CARE for Children Center. Fifteen children were in attendance and each child decorated cookies and made some to take home (and eat!). John Williams European Pastry Shop donated 25 pounds of sugar cookie dough for the program. Children won prizes at bingo and had pizza for dinner.

From top: Trailblazer Coach Matt Gilligan (center) is surrounded by the team including volunteer (left) Evan Schmidt and (far right) CARE Occupational Therapy Assistant, DeAnn Persichini.

Bottom: DeAnn Persichini helped CARE kids decorate sugar cookies at CARE's Cookie and Bingo Night at the Ashley Booth Griffin CARE for Children Center.



BEST BABY PLAYGROUP

The Best Baby Playgroup is a free program geared for babies, toddlers, and parents and is held the third Wednesday of the month at the Bradford Area Public Library, Early Learning Center at 6:00 p.m.

The playgroup includes a short activity, a chance for children to play, and an opportunity for families to network. Upcoming dates and topics include:

February 17, 2016 - Craft Night
 March 16, 2016 - Super Simple Music
 April 20, 2016 - Messy Play
 May 18, 2016 - Gross Motor Movement
 June 15, 2016 - Super Simple Music

The program is funded by a United Way *Community Impact* Grant and is staffed by CARE therapists and teachers. For more information call CARE at 362-4621 or visit www.careforchildren.info/specialevents or CARE for Children, McKean County Facebook page.

BEST BABY PROGRAM - TO BE HELD IN SMETHPORT Music and Movement to Promote Early Learning

Monday, April 18, 2016

Hamlin Memorial Library, Smethport, PA - 6:00 p.m.

This is a free, interactive program for babies and toddlers, 10 months to 32 months, which includes fun songs and activities; promotes movement; and encourages language development.

Presented by Rachel Bell, "The Music Lady."

Bradford Rotary and Rotary District #7280 Donate Therapy Equipment

The Rotary Club of Bradford, along with matching grant funds from Rotary District #7280, recently purchased a vestibulator for CARE for Children.

A vestibulator is a swing system which helps provide neuro-developmental and sensory integration therapy for children on the Autism spectrum and children with other disabilities.

When used with various swings, the vestibulator provides a means to stimulate areas of the brain and it enables therapists to work on range exercises to help children achieve normal developmental milestones, while having fun. It features a 360-degree vertical rotation system for a smooth, unrestricted range of movement.



Pictured above, CARE Occupational Therapist, Kim Miller, utilizes the vestibulator during an early intervention therapy session at the Ashley Booth Griffin CARE for Children Center. The swing pictured was purchased with an indoor stationary system and additional swings. The swings can be used either indoors or outdoors on the playground.

CARE for Children Tribute Gifts

MEMORIALS

October 1st, 2015 through January 31st, 2016

In Memory of:

Jeff Armstrong
Shirley Autieri
Charles Bonawitz
Marion Booth
William Bowler

Joseph Butler

Anthony DelVecchio
Sarah B. Dorn

George B. Duke Jr.

Florence B. Evans
Scott Falk Fiscus
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Si Slocum; Mark Smith; William and Debra Taylor; "The Big Ten"; J.C. BAR Development
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Greg and Cherie Booth; Mike Martin; Margie Rounsville
Craig McGill
Jim McGill
Steven and Kathleen Kresge
Hugh and Carol Feiro; Mike and Joan Kemick
Zippo Manufacturing Company Employees
Greg and Cherie Booth; John Freaney; Tina Martin

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Pediatric Equipment Loan
Resource & Adaptive Toy Library
Disability Awareness

Executive Director:
Tina M. Martin

Do you know a baby or toddler who is having trouble rolling over, walking, talking or meeting developmental milestones?



CARE for Children is a provider of free Early Intervention Services for children birth to three. CARE has pediatric specialists on staff—including physical therapists, occupational therapists, teachers, a speech-language pathologist, and a social worker who help children reach those important childhood developmental goals.

Call our office at **814-362-4621** or call our friends at Early Intervention for a free assessment.

Ages Birth to Three: McKean County: 814-975-1221; Forest/Warren Counties: 814-726-2100

Ages Three to School Age: 814-887-5512

CARE for Children has been helping local children grow since 1924.