CHILD CARE COUNCIL
Your premier resource. Inc.

CARING MATTERS

December 2013 - Vol. 31 Issue 12

Start Bright Gala a Resounding Success!

October 24, 2013. The evening started with hors d'oeuvres and refreshments while guests enjoyed participating in games, prizes, raffle ticket sales, and a silent auction, all while listening to beautiful music performed by pianist Oleksandra Yurchenko.

Guests then progressed to the dining area where a welcome address and introductions were given by Ginny Ryan of 13 WHAM News. Introductions were followed by a delicious buffet dinner.

The highlight of the evening was when Child Care Council Inc. presented its inaugural Start Bright Impact Awards for exemplifying the critical role that high-quality child care plays in the lives of young people.

It was a difficult task choosing between all of the heartfelt nominations that were received.

We are proud to have so many dedicated, professional and caring people watching over the children in our communities.

See page 15 for a complete list of this years honorees.

President Christopher Yuskiw-CEO Barbara-Ann Mattle -Editor Jennifer Weykman

* * * * * LOCATIONS * * * * *

Livingston County Branch Office
3513 Thomas Dr. Suite 4
Lakeville, NY 14480-0670
Phone: (585) 346-6050
Fax: (585) 346-6058

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595 Blossom Rd. Suite 120
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Phone: (585) 654-4720
Fax: (585) 654-4721

Wayne County Branch Office
510 West Union St., Suite 1
Newark, NY 14513-9201
Phone: (315) 331-5443
Fax: (315) 331-5271

Family Focus

The December Holidays

By Jill Griffith, Referral Specialist

The month of December has many holidays. Some of them include Christmas, Kwanzaa and usually Chanukah. This is the time of year when families share traditions.

Families take out decorations that may have been collected over years and make their home a wonderland. It is a wonderful time to share customs with friends and family.

Many ideas can be found on the internet to help both parent and caregivers find fun activities. Children can be introduced to different cultures. It teaches children about other children and should teach them respect for all.

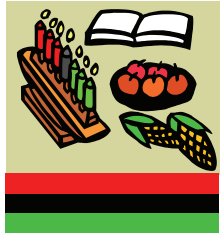
I remember when my daughter was in first grade. The children went to another room leaving a shoe behind. Magically, when they returned, the shoe was full of candy. This is a tradition in Holland. Tree decorations for Christmas are always a fun activity. Children can make wrapping paper, decorations and gift tags. Chains, counting the days until the holiday help all know when the holiday will happen.

Chanukah is a Jewish holiday when candles are lit. It's about miraculous events that can be told to the children.

Kwanzaa is an African-American holiday that starts the day after Christmas. It promotes culture.

To find activities and stories, check out the internet. Some social media sites like www.pinterest.com have many creative ideas. Many great books can be borrowed from the local library and Child Care Council's children's library.

Enjoy and relax!



Five People Honored for Outstanding Child Care Success Stories

ROCHESTER, N.Y., Nov. 6, 2013 – Child Care Council Inc. recently honored four child care providers and one child previously in care with its inaugural Start Bright Impact Awards for exemplifying the critical role that high-quality child care plays in the lives of young people.

Recognized at the Council's Start Bright Gala, the award recipients were:

- Ann and Barry Benedict of Annie's Playcare in Greece. The Benedicts were nominated for the award by Andrea Beckett for the Benedict's success with her son, Mason Triassi. Mason was able to achieve age-appropriate developmental milestones, improve social and reading and learning skills, and become prepared for kindergarten, with the Benedict's assistance and guidance.
- Naydaly Gonzalez of Naydaly's Family Daycare in Rochester, who was nominated by Shanna Branciforte for Gonzalez's success with her son, Stefko. Naydaly Gonzalez ensured that Stekfo, who has Down syndrome and is non-verbal, had developmentally appropriate toys and helped him play and socialize with other children. He also is developing communication skills, such as learning sign language to communicate.
- Michele Hutchingson, who was the first child cared for by Robert and Betty Bentley of Nanny's Place Daycare in Greece. Nominated by Michele's parents, Peg and Jim Hankey, Michele forged healthy relationships and lifestyle and work ethics, according to the Hankeys, due to the teachings and positive reinforcements she received while at Nanny's Place Daycare. Michele even worked at Nanny's Place when she was older, assisting with the care of younger children. Robert Bentley was posthumously honored with a certificate of honor for his years of service.
- Rose Malinowski of Irondequoit, who was nominated by Michelle Weaver-Sweeney for the success with her son, Charlie. Born with Down syndrome, Charlie's development thrived while in Malinowski's care. He started walking at two years old, learned some sign language and can solve puzzles and perform problem-solving tasks. Charlie Sweeney also completed an early intervention program and started a preschool program, which – according to his mom – wouldn't be possible without his success in child care.

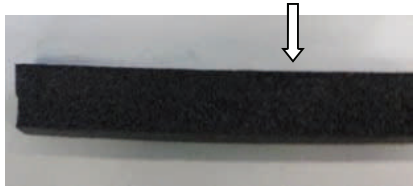
Pearl Tokar of the Rush Henrietta School-Age Child Care Program. Tokar was nominated for the award by Dawn and Jon Lindboom for the success story of their daughter, Greta, who has physical disabilities. Greta was able to participate in a normal child care setting for five years, participating in field trips, plays, dance recitals and more. Pearl Tokar also has kept Greta's memory alive with the students and community since her passing, including supporting an annual Hop-a-Thon for MDA in Greta's name.

Child Care Council launched its Start Bright Impact Awards this year to honor outstanding child care success stories. These awards pay tribute to specific accomplishments attributed to the wonderful work of child care providers.

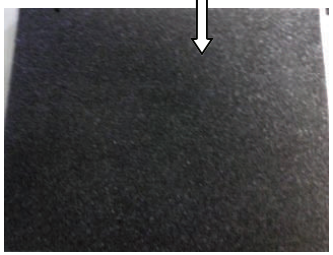
News You Can Use

THE RECYCLE SHOP
ITEM OF THE MONTH IS:

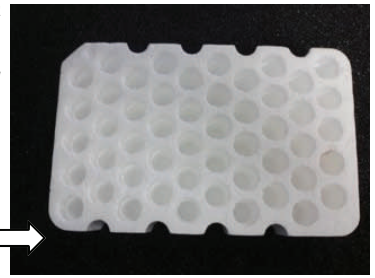
Strips of Hard Foam 10/$1 or Bag Item



Soft Foam approximately 15"x12"x1" One large side is peel and stick 25¢ each or Bag Item



Styrofoam pieces with holes 8"x5 1/2"x2" 10/$1 or Bag Item



Help to build the CHILD CARE COUNCIL'S Provider Scholarship Fund

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Mail form and Donation to:
Scholarship Fund
CHILD CARE COUNCIL, INC.
595 Blossom Road, Suite 120
Rochester, NY 14610

Name_____Home Phone ( )_____

Address_____City_____Zip_____

Email_____

Donation Amount_____

Payment Information: Check #_____

MC/Visa# _____Exp. Date_____ V#_____

(3 digit # on back of credit card)

Signature:_____

The Know Place ?

Involving Families This Holiday Season

By Andrea McKenna, Education Specialist

The holidays are approaching and as I think about the holidays, one word comes to mind , "family." Each family in your care that celebrates holidays, celebrate in different ways. Some may even celebrate different holidays. These differences create opportunities for wonderful learning experiences for the children in your care and opportunities to involve parents and guardians in your program.

As the holidays approach, ask the parents and guardians what holidays they celebrate, how they celebrate those holidays, and what traditions their families have. You can do this by sending out a questionnaire. In the questionnaire, ask if parents would be willing to share some of their traditions. Give examples of ways that families could share their traditions without having to take time off during the day to come to the programs.

For example;

- Some parents make ginger bread houses with their children. They may be willing to bake the gingerbread and send in the toppings to decorate the house.
- If parents read certain books to their children during the holidays, they can let the program borrow the book and even tape themselves reading it.
- Some families eat certain foods during the holidays and they can send in different samples of the foods they eat.

Choose what traditions you would like to share in your program and make a calendar of activities for the parents. Make sure you share the activities you plan on doing with the parents before you do them so that all parents are comfortable with what you are teaching their children. Be sensitive to families that don't celebrate certain holidays and try to choose activities that have more to do with the feelings a holiday evokes.

Nurse Notes

Indoor Air Quality

By Chris Kordenbrock, RN, Health Care Consultant

We all spend a lot of time indoors. That environment can have a significant impact on our health. This is especially true for a person who has asthma and/or allergies.

When we share indoor space with other occupants, we are sharing the air which contains contaminated organisms and can be more polluted than outdoor air. There are a few things anyone can do to provide healthy indoor air quality either in a home or center.

The New York State Child Day Care Regulations state that "Rooms that will be used by the children must be well-lighted and well-ventilated. Heating, ventilating and lighting equipment must be adequate for the protection of the health of the children…..A temperature of at least 68 degrees Fahrenheit must be maintained in all rooms to be occupied by children." This means that vents in rooms must be open and not blocked to allow good air flow.

According to the AAP under the recommendation to control the "common cold" it states to "Ventilate the facility with fresh outdoor air and maintain temperature and humidity conditions as described in Caring For Our Children, 3rd edition: Indoor Temperature– Winter months: 68-75 degrees Fahrenheit with 30-50% relative humidity." Also in Caring for Our Children standard 5.2.1.1: Fresh Air, "As much fresh air as possible should be provided in rooms occupied by children. Windows should be opened whenever weather and the outdoor air quality permits or when children are out of the room." It also states: Indoor air can contain dirt, moisture and warmth which "encourages the growth of mold and other contaminants, which can trigger allergic reactions and asthma."

If you want to obtain an Asthma Friendly Child Care Endorsement, the Health Care Consultants can help you with that. We'll provide you with a checklist about your program's environment to help you identify areas that may need improvement. Then we'll come to your site to check for, among other things, moisture and humidity levels.

We are here to help you and your kids stay healthy!

Holiday Tip: Decorating with greenery during the holidays can be a beautiful thing, however, be mindful that with fresh greenery may come allergens that may be an irritant to children in your care. Check with parents for any concerns and keep an extra eye on the children for any symptoms of sensitivity such as wheezing, sneezing, stuffy nose, itching, rash, hives, etc.

CCC Membership Benefits and Application

Individual Membership—$35.00/yr

Benefits

- Loan privileges at the Early Childhood Professional Libraries
- My First Library loan privileges for your own children between the ages of 6 wks thru 5 yrs
- Free Notary Public Services
- Council Pin, Lanyard, Tote Bag or Cooler Beach Bag

Child Care Center Staff Member, Registered Family Child Care Provider or Legally Exempt Child Care Provider Membership-$50/yr

All Benefits Above Plus

- 50% discount on Business Center Services
- 10% membership discount every Tuesday on Recycle Shop purchases
- Access to group rate Health and Dental Insurance
- Substantial member savings on Council offered classes and events

Non-Child Care Organization Membership—$75/yr

All Benefits Above Plus

- $5.00 discount on individual staff memberships in the Child Care Council

Single Site Group Family Child Care Provider—$75/yr

All Benefits Above Plus

- Substantial member discount on in-service training at your location
- Substantial discount on Council classes and events for provider and assistants

Child Care Center, Nursery School, School-Age, Multi-Site Group Family Child Care Membership

$100.00/yr (1-10 staff members) $200.00/yr (21-30 staff members)
$150.00/yr (11-20 staff members) $250.00/yr (31+ staff members)

All Benefits Above Plus

- Substantial Discount on Individualized Training Program and In-Service Sessions
- All staff members eligible for substantial member savings on Council classes and events

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CCC Annual Membership Application

□ Individual Membership ($35)
□ Center Staff Member Membership ($50)
□ Family Provider Membership ($50)
□ Single Site Group Family Child Care Membership ($75)
□ Non-Child Care Organization Membership ($75)
□ CACFP Family Provider ($25)
□ CACFP Group Provider ($37.50)
□ Center □ Nursery School □ School-Age □ Multiple Site □ Group Family
□ 1 - 10 Staff Members ($100) □ 21-30 Staff members ($200)
□ 11-20 Staff members ($150) □ 31+ Staff members ($250)

Mail form & payment to:
Child Care Council Membership
595 Blossom Road, Suite 120
Rochester, NY 14610

Membership Fees are non-refundable

Please √ one
___ New Membership
___Renewal Memb. Membership #_____

Name_____Home Phone ( )_____

Home Address_____City_____Zip_____

Center Name_____Center Phone ( )_____

Center Address_____City_____Zip_____

Total $:_____ MC/Visa#_____Exp. Date_____ V#_____
(3 digit # on back of credit card)

Amount Enclosed:_____- Check #_____ Signature:_____

Please check one: □ Council Pin □ Lanyard □ Carabiner Key Tag

DISAPPOINTING NEWS

October 24, 2013

Today, Empire Justice Center learned that Governor Cuomo has vetoed A.3498A, which would have provided parents who lose their child care subsidies with more time to find safe alternate care for their children while they work. The bill, sponsored by Assemblywoman Peoples-Stokes and Senator Grisanti from the Buffalo area addressed the concern that currently parents get less than 10 days' notice – often plunging these hard working low income families into immediate crisis as they struggle and sometimes fail to find more money, cheaper care for their kids.

The legislation was conceived in 2010 when Erie County moved to cut child care eligibility – pushing approximately 40% of eligible children out of childcare – and chaos ensued. Since then, dozens of counties have been forced to cut eligibility for child care assistance – and each time, parents have been caught off guard – with very little time to react.

While disappointed by the veto, Empire Justice Center is pleased that it was not based on the merits of the bill. We are also encouraged that the Governor has acknowledged that this is an important issue that New York must address by directing the Office of Children and Family Services to determine how to achieve the goal of ensuring that impacted families receive earlier notice of child care assistance changes.

We stand ready to work with the Governor, the Legislature and the Office of Children and Family Services in achieving this goal in whatever way we can.

Kristin Brown Lilley
Vice President for Government & Policy
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Estimulación En La Escritura

Por Héctor Santiago, Coordinador Servicios para los Latinos

La etapa preescolar es tal vez el momento más crucial del desarrollo integral del niño y el futuro adulto. A esta edad, los sentidos, tanto externos, vista, audición, tacto, olfato, gusto, como internos, es decir los que se activan sin relación directa con otros objetos, -el sentido cenestésico, por ejemplo-, se ven estimulados constantemente y son capaces de ejercer acciones principales, pues juntos se encuentran en plena fase de maduración; entonces, muchas de las destrezas más importantes que llega a adquirir el ser humano se desarrollan en esta etapa de su vida. Durante los cinco primeros años de formación, el niño requiere la manipulación dirigida de objetos para desarrollar su motricidad, estimular el desarrollo de su pensamiento y el aprendizaje sucesivo de habilidades más complejas como la lectoescritura. Tareas como rasgar, cortar, pintar, colorear o enhebrar se relacionan directamente con la capacidad del infante de coordinar su visión con los movimientos de manos y dedos.

La lecto-escritura es un proceso cognitivo que requiere de cierta madurez perceptiva, especialmente en las áreas visual, auditiva y de motricidad. Por tanto, desde hace varios años, las investigaciones realizadas por los psicopedagogos enfocados en el tema de la pre-escritura y la didáctica alrededor de la lectura y la escritura han hecho del tema de la psicomotricidad un aspecto al que le han puesto un alto grado de atención, partiendo de la idea de que no se trata de que el niño "aprenda las letras y sus sonidos, las palabras y sus significados", sino de que establezca una relación psicomotriz con el acto de producir lenguaje. De esta forma, la relación cuerpo-lenguaje se hace cada vez más clara y es de vital importancia que los estudiantes cuenten con las herramientas e implementos adecuados para facilitar el desarrollo de sus habilidades y destrezas en esta etapa crucial. Igualmente, es importante que los educadores especializados en estas edades mantengan la búsqueda de ideas, conceptos innovadores y demás herramientas que les permitan perfeccionar su práctica, como actividades en clase y soportes para realizar acciones didácticas tales como cuadernos, lápices, colores, cartulina o plastilina entre otros.

El Educador, Agosto 2008

Food For Thought

Hearty Recipes for Colder Weather

By Laurie Haley, Director of Nutrition and Environmental Education

Try these recipes for those cold winter days:

HEARTY LENTIL SOUP

3 cups water
3 cups low sodium vegetable broth
1 cup carrot, sliced
1 cup onion, chopped
1 cup celery, sliced
1/2 cup green pepper, chopped
1 cup dried lentils, rinsed
1/4 cup uncooked brown rice
1 teaspoon dried basil
1 garlic clove, minced
1 bay leaf
1 6-ounce can tomato paste
1/2 cup fresh or frozen corn
1/2 cup fresh or frozen green peas

In a large stockpot, combine water, broth, carrots, onion, celery, green pepper, lentils, rice, basil, garlic, and bay leaf. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 1 to 1.5 hours, or until lentils and rice are tender.
Add tomato paste, corn, and peas. cook uncovered for 15 to 20 minutes. Discard bay leaf.

Meets CACFP requirements :
1 serving meat alternate
1 serving vegetable

VEGETABLE & CHEESE STUFFED SHELLS

16 uncooked jumbo pasta shells
2 cups marinara/tomato sauce
1 cup fresh or frozen leaf spinach, thawed
1 cup fresh or frozen broccoli florets, thawed
1 15-ounce container part-skim ricotta cheese
2 ounces reduced-fat grated Parmesan cheese
4 ounces part-skim mozarella shredded cheese
1/2 teaspoon pepper, pinch of salt
1 clove garlic, minced

Cook the pasta shells according to package directions for al dente. Drain and rinse under cold water. Spread the sauce in a baking dish large enough to hold all of the stuffed shells. If using frozen spinach, squeeze all excess water. Chop spinach and broccoli into small pieces and place in a large mixing bowl.
Stir in ricotta, parmesan, 1/2 the mozzarella, garlic, salt and pepper. Fill each shell evenly with the mixture by spoon, and place in baking dish on top of sauce.
Bake at 400 degrees until the shells are heat through, about 12-15 minutes. Increase heat to broil, and broil the shells untl the cheese begins to brown, 2-3 minutes.

Meets CACFP requirements :
1 serving meat
1 serving vegetable

Class Schedule

New items are in BOLD *Classes are 6:30pm—9:00pm unless otherwise noted*

Categories are listed in parenthesis ( ) following the date.

Rochester Office:
12/2-Intro. to Family Child Care
12/2-Joining CACFP-FREE
12/3-(4) Fire and Program Safety
12/3-1/23/14-(✸) Starting Your Own Child Care Business 101
12/4-(7) Know Your Regulations-Center
12/12-MAT Skills Competency Demonstration 9:30am-12:30pm
12/9 or 12/11 (2,4,7) MAT Independent Study Class 6:00pm-9:00pm
12/7 & 14 (DATE CHANGE) (2,4,7) MAT Training Saturdays 9:00am-2:00pm
12/14-(2,4) CPR and First Aid Saturday 9:00am-2:00pm
12/16-(2,4,5) Asthma 101
12/16-(3,5) Business Practices for Family Child Care
12/18-(2,3,5)Make Your Child Care Eco-Healthy
12/19-(1,3) Play, it's that Simple!

Lakeville Office:
12/2-1/27/14-(✸) Starting Your Own Child Care Business 101

Newark Office:
12/2-(Varies) Wayne County Family Child Care Professional Development & Support Series
12/3 & 5-(2,4) CPR and First Aid
12/4-MAT Skills Competency Demonstration
12/10-Joining CACFP-FREE

Coming Soon

The January-June 2014 Child Care Council Course Calendar.

Keep an eye on your mailbox for the latest edition.

Please note that the Medication Administration Training class originally scheduled for December 14th and 21st has been changed to December 7th and 14th.

See the Jul-Dec 2013 Course Calendar for more details and a full list of courses.
Child Care Council courses, and links to SUNY videoconference information and EIP applications are available at www.childcarecouncil.com

✸ **The Starting Your Own Child Care Business 101 Series covers all Family Child Care categories and includes:**

- Health & Safety
- CPR & First Aid
- Introduction to CACFP
- Business Class
- Developing Your Program
- Tax Class

Child Care Council

Office Schedule and Calendar of Events

Monroe County-Rochester
Regular hours are Mon-Fri 9am-5pm.
Other hours available by appointment.

Livingston County-Lakeville & Wayne County-Newark
Regular hours are Mon-Fri 9am-5pm closed from 1pm to 2pm.
Other hours available by appointment.

December

- *4th- Closed for staff meeting 12-2pm*
- *25th Closed for Christmas*

January 2014

- *1st Closed for New Years Day*

Check out our social media pages!

Twitter	https://twitter.com/ChildCareCoun
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/pages/Child-Care-Council-Inc/140064946010719
Pinterest	http://pinterest.com/cccouncilinc/
YouTube	http://www.youtube.com/user/ChildCareCouncilinc

CDA 2.0 Tips and Updates

The CDA Credential has a new look!

With the launch of CDA 2.0 - the new and improved CDA credentialing process, the Council also updated the look of the CDA Credential. The new CDA Credential now features a printed CDA Credential setting, the credential date, expiration date, a unique credential identification number and a beautifully foil-embossed gold CDA seal. We are very excited about the new look of the CDA Credential and know you too will be proud to display this new design.

A Closer Look

Regulation Changes

By Kristinne Seibel, Registration Services Director

It's official—The Family Day Care regulations are changing. The public comment phase has ended and the new regulations, as adopted, were posted on the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) website on October 1 (http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/legal/Regulatory/final/).

May 1, 2014 is the date the regulations will go into full effect. So we have been given 6 months from the date the regulations were released until we are responsible to fully implement these changes.

The only constant in our lives is change and we must be ready to meet the challenges that this particular change puts before us. It may help us all if we keep in mind that in this business of child care, all regulatory changes are made in an effort to protect children and/or to increase the quality of care they receive. In this way, the regulations set the professional standards that we all agree upon as they relate to our shared mission - safe and quality child care for all children who need care.

How Providers and Registrars will work together to implement these changes:

- We will work collaboratively to fully understand the changes and what they mean to our work
- We will work collaboratively to implement the new regulations in a timely manner and according to the full intent of the law

All providers will be receiving a copy of the new regulations from OCFS. In the mean time you can check them out on the web. Registration staff are available to answer any questions or concerns you may have regarding implementation. We will be offering information regularly over the next 5 months—more Caring Matters articles dedicated to the topic, group sessions and one on one assistance as needed.

Eco-Healthy Child Care®

Top 10 Eco-Healthy Tips for the Holidays

1. Buy and use only rechargeable batteries.
2. Try reusing paper grocery bags flipped inside out and decorated with soy ink stamps for unique wrapping paper! Another great idea is to enclose all your gifts in re-usable cotton mini shopping bags, the recipient can use them over and over again.
3. Try soy or beeswax candles. They are cleaner and gentler on the environment but are every bit as beautiful and fragrant. Plus they last longer!
4. If you are buying a gift for a child, consider making it activity-based rather than a material good. You could gift a day at the Zoo, a local museum, or the time and materials to make a project you normally don't have time for.
5. Buy items with minimal packaging and/or made with recycled content. To make sure an item is toxic-free, check out www.healthystuff.org. This site has tested over 5,000 products for chemicals of concern.
6. Turn down your thermostat a few notches before your guests arrive. As more guests arrive, the room's temperature will rise to a comfortable level, and you will save a significant amount of energy!
7. Instead of chemically based air fresheners, scented paraffin candles and potpourri, try simmering cinnamon sticks on the stove or placing a few drops of pure essential oils on stones or pine cones.
8. Don't buy or make more food than you'll need. If there are leftovers, send guests home with extras in pre-saved glass jars instead of plastic wrap. Compost food scraps.
9. Emphasize togetherness and people over things. What would your guests enjoy? Music, games and cooking together create memories and teach our children (and ourselves) that love and friendship are zero-waste.
10. LED (or in some cases, solar), holiday lights for the home can be found in colors and styles to reflect your taste and traditions. If you have old lights, enjoy them until they need to be replaced, but be sure to use a timer and keep them on for only 4-6 hours per night.

For more information about our Eco-Healthy Child Care program, contact: Kate (585)654-4752 or k.mcardle@childcarecouncil.com.

NEWS FROM CPSC

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission is charged with protecting the public from unreasonable risks of injury or death from thousands of types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. The CPSC is committed to protecting consumers and families from products that pose a fire, electrical, chemical, or mechanical hazard or can injure children.

Following is one of the important recalls to be found on the CPSC website at www.cpsc.gov. On the site you can sign up to receive alerts through many avenues including email, youtube, and twitter.

Product Recall

Recall Date: October 23, 2013

Infinitoy Recalls Softimals Toy Sets Due to Choking and Aspiration Hazard

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Consumers should stop using this product, which is being recalled voluntarily, unless otherwise instructed. It is illegal to resell or attempt to resell a recalled consumer product.

Recall Summary

Name of Product: Building Toy Play sets

Hazard: The plastic hats found on play set figures pose a choking/aspiration hazard for children.

Remedy: Consumers should immediately remove the plastic hat from Safari Sam and Mighty Mike and contact Infinitoy Inc., to exchange the hat for a free replacement figure.

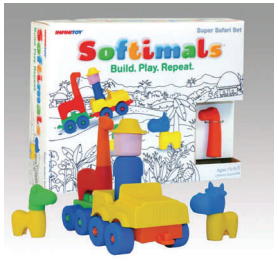
Consumer Contact: Infinitoy, Inc. toll-free at (888) 558-0933 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. PT Monday through Friday, or online at www.infinitoy.com , then click on Safety/Recall at the bottom of the page for more information.

Photos available at http://www.cpsc.gov/en/Recalls/2014/Infinitoy-Recalls-Softimals-Toy-Sets/

Recall Details

Units: About 7,134 units

Description: Infinitoy Inc. is recalling the Super Safari Set model #30025 and the Deluxe Circus Train Set model #30040. The model number can be found on the back of the box in the lower right corner. The sets come in a white box with "Softimals. Build, Play, Repeat" and "Ages 1 ½ to 5" printed in a colorful font on the front and back of the package. The sets have numerous plastic pieces that can be connected and fit together to build a vehicle pulling cars with a hippo, giraffe, zebra and other animals. The drivers of the lead vehicles, Safari Sam and Mighty Mike, have removable blue or yellow plastic hats.

Incidents/Injuries: CPSC is aware of one incident in which an 18-month-old child placed a hat in their mouth and started to gag/choke but the toy was removed. No injuries have been reported.

Sold at: Specialty toy stores nationwide and online at Amazon.com and Mindware.com from September 2012 to September 2013 for about $25 and $40.