



Celebrate Earth Day!

Earth Day is an annual day dedicated to environmental awareness. April 22nd provides parents and child care providers with a terrific opportunity to talk with children about our responsibilities for taking care of our planet. Here are 4 simple things you can do to celebrate:

1. Read a book! Dr. Seuss's book **The Lorax** may be one of the best known children's books about the environment and trees. Read **The Lorax** together. Talk about the difference between the land before and after the Once-ler arrived. Discuss ways the Lorax spoke for the trees and why it's important to speak up for something you believe in. **The Earth Book** is from popular children's author Todd Parr. His unique style of colorful illustrations and simple text hits the mark with preschool and kindergarten audiences every time. Each page highlights one way kids can help make the world a better place followed by a "because" statement.
2. Plant a tree! Learning how to choose the right tree or plant for your location involves reading and understanding the tags provided with plants. Work together to decipher the symbols related to amount of sunlight and water appropriate for a plant.
3. Go for a walk! Go on a nature walk in your neighborhood. As you walk, use a simple science journal to record any wildlife, animal tracks, insects, or interesting plants that you see. Draw pictures and write captions too.
4. Give yourself a hand! Ask your child to trace a hand and cut it out. On each finger, your child can write one way he or she can help the Earth. Ideas might include turning off a light when leaving a room, shutting off the water when brushing teeth, or opening a window instead of using the air conditioner.

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



CARING MATTERS

April 2014 - Vol. 32 Issue 4



Child Care Council Offers Nationally Recognized Babysitting Course for Young Teens

Program training includes personal safety, rescue skills, first aid, babysitting business tips

Young teens and adolescents ages 11 and older who are interested in providing babysitting services can take advantage of a nationally recognized program at Child Care Council.

The Council, now a registered Safe Sitter® teaching site, offers a comprehensive babysitting training program that prepares graduates to handle emergencies when caring for younger children and equips them with the tools needed to stay home alone safely.

Upcoming course dates at Child Care Council offices include:

Newark—April 16, 9am to 3:30pm

Rochester—July 9, 9am to 3:30pm

Lakeville—August 25, 9am to 3:30pm

Rochester—November 11, 9am to 3:30pm

For more information about the program, contact Linda Lane, Safe Sitter site coordinator, at Child Care Council at 585.654.1223 or at

l.lane@childcarecouncil.com. To register, contact Linda Stilson at 585.654.4794 or at l.stilson@childcarecouncil.com.



President Christopher Yuskiv-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

Main Office
595 Blossom Rd. Suite 120
Rochester, NY 14610-1825
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



Fun Spring

By Josean Vargas, Referral Specialist

Spring is approaching and we are all excited about it. After all these months of cold and snow, we all want to have some fun outside enjoying the sun and the fresh air.

A great activity the little ones will surely enjoy is a **“nature treasure hunt”**. This is what you’ll need. It will require some preparation time.

- Go out in the yard and find some treasures that are readily accessible for the kids to find.
- Take photos or find images you can print out.
- Glue the photos on to a egg carton or a shoe box. Your little ones will use the box to keep their new found treasures.
- Now go outside and have fun searching for treasures.



If your kids are into gardening, another fun activity is to start your own vegetable garden from seeds. Your kids will have lots of fun creating this eco-friendly seed starter using an egg carton and eggshells to grow their veggies.

- First lightly tap the top side of the egg shell with a knife, making a small dent, and then use scissors to cut the top off. Once you have emptied the shell, wash it and your hands with soap and water.
- Fill each shell with already dampened soil and plant your seeds; 3 is a good number. Don't let the soil dry out. Mist or water with a teaspoon, one per shell when needed.
- Keep out of direct sunlight until they are established and increase direct sun each day after that to prepare them for transplant when they are ready. You may need to thin your seeds depending on the size of the plant as it takes off to just one per shell.

<http://www.parentmap.com/article/15-garden-crafts-for-kids?page=14>

<http://blog.imaginechildhood.com/imagine-childhood/2009/03/egg-sprouts.html>



Join the CDA Council for Webinars in English and Spanish!

Next month, the Council will begin hosting a three-part webinar series on how to navigate and prepare for the new CDA assessment process. These weekly sessions, which will be conducted in both Spanish and English, begin in early March and will conclude at the end of April. Details for each weekly session will be posted on the Council website at www.cdacouncil.org. Log on often for more information.

CDA Council Launches Spanish Web Page

A new Council web page was recently launched in Spanish.

To visit the new site go to www.cdacouncil.org.

This new page currently lists the following information:

- A link to the bookstore publications in Spanish
 - The Council's address, office hours and telephone number
 - The Council's e-mail address and access to the chat line
- Moving forward, this section of the website will be expanded to include additional information and resources on the CDA credentialing process, how to renew, FAQs and downloadable forms in Spanish.

THE RECYCLE SHOP ITEM OF THE MONTH IS:

Foam Pieces

Always a great base for any art project

These pieces are 14 inches long and 8 inches wide

Buy them by the bag or 12 for \$1.00.

Many other foam shapes and sizes are available.

Come see us soon!



News You Can Use



What is C.A.S.H.?

C.A.S.H. is an Empire Justice Center and United Way of Greater Rochester-led community coalition that helps working families get the money and assistance they've earned.

What does C.A.S.H. offer?

C.A.S.H. volunteers will prepare and e-file your tax return **for FREE**. They can also connect you to free credit reports, home buying programs, affordable banking and more!

FAST@C.A.S.H.

(Available at select site locations)

If you are comfortable with computers and have an email account that you regularly use, you can prepare your own tax return using on-line software at one of our participating tax sites. Trained C.A.S.H. volunteers will help you with any questions you have while you do-it-yourself at one of our FAST@C.A.S.H. kiosks. Just ask a volunteer at the site!

For information about dates, times and locations call 585-242-6485

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



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

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

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



The Ties That Bind: Relationships that Last

By Rose Shufelt, Infant Toddler Specialist

Infants begin building relationships from the moment of birth. They begin with consistent relationships with family members and with their child care provider. It is upon this foundation that infants are able to grow and learn. Because of this, we strongly recommend that child care centers provide primary and continuity of care for their infants and toddlers.

Child care programs begin by assigning a primary caregiver who remains with the child over an extended period of time. The primary caregiver is usually assigned to four or five children and families. This caregiver assesses and responds to the needs of the child and communicates with the family. A mutual caring and trusting relationship forms among the caregiver, the child, and the family. Children experience consistency of style, feelings of security, belonging, and love. As a result, primary caregivers have stronger bonds with their children and families and parent communication is a priority.

Continuity of care allows teachers to stay with their primary groups until they are age three and ready to transition into preschool classrooms. This cuts down on the number of transitions throughout the year. It is important for young children to build strong attachments to their primary caregivers as it promotes their social, emotional and cognitive development. "The damaging effects of multiple changes in childcare caregivers can range from an inability to form lasting, loving and trusting attachments later in life to negative effects on a child's long term development and school performance." (Pruissen, 2005) They, like us, grieve; feel less secure, experience confusion and stress. When a new person enters to replace the relationship that they know, infants must begin over trying to understand and connect with that person. If it happens often enough, they may quit trying or learn to expect that people just disappear.

It is the responsibility of the community to assure that infants begin life with the opportunity to establish secure relationships. This means investing in the care of infants and toddlers so that caregivers remain with their primary care groups and develop deep relationships with the infants and families that they care for. By building firm supports through early relationships, infants will have a basis on which to construct their future development.

Clostridium difficile or C diff Spreading Outside of Hospitals

By Emily Leone RN, C-PNP Health Services Coordinator

Clostridium difficile or *C diff* used to be typically associated with elderly persons with recent hospital admission requiring antibiotics. Case reports now show a significant increase in young children infected with *C diff* who have not had recent hospital admission, indicating a community acquired infection.

The cardinal signs of a mild *C diff* infection are watery stools 2 or more times a day for 2 or more days with mild abdominal cramping. In severe infections toxins from the *C diff* bacteria cause inflammation of the intestines resulting in fever, blood or pus in the stool, nausea, loss of appetite, dehydration, and weight loss. People can also be infected with the *Clostridium difficile* bacteria and have no symptoms; these people are called carriers.

Risk factors associated with infection include:

- Antibiotic use that kill protective 'good bacteria' in the gut
- Stomach acid reducing medications

Excellent hand-washing, environmental controls, and exclusion of children with diarrhea are the best way to prevent the spread of infection which can occur quickly in the early care environment.

Hand-washing: The *Clostridium difficile* bacterium forms a hard-coating called a spore around itself making it difficult to kill. This makes it relatively easy to wash off your hands with thorough hand washing with soap and warm water. To prevent the spread of the *C diff* spores in the environment, children and provider's hands should be thoroughly washed after diapering and/or toileting. To prevent the ingestion of the *C diff* spores staff and children should thoroughly wash their hands before eating and frequently throughout the day. Remember, *C diff* can be spread by people with no symptoms.

Environmental controls: Hands should only be washed in designated hand washing sinks and not in food prep sinks. Hard surfaces should be disinfected with a product with sporicidal activity. A 1:9 solution of 8.25% bleach is effective, but it should be used with extreme caution. It should be used in a well-ventilated area and cannot be used around children

Exclusion: Children with diarrhea should be excluded from care until the diarrhea is resolved.

CCC Membership Benefits and Application

Individual-Non-Child Care Membership—\$35.00/yr

- 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 Carabineer Key Tag

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

- All Benefits** ➤ 50% discount on Business Center Services
- Above Plus** ➤ 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

\$150.00/yr (1-10 staff members) \$250.00/yr (21-30 staff members)
\$200.00/yr (11-20 staff members) \$300.00/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

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 (\$150)
 - 21-30 Staff members (\$250)
 - 11-20 Staff members (\$200)
 - 31+ Staff members (\$300)

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

2014 Legislative Agenda

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) services

- **\$1 million to Support CCR&R Services Statewide**
 - The cut in funding in 2012 jeopardizes the capacity of the CCR&R network to connect families and communities to child care, keeping New Yorkers working while building quality early learning experiences for children, New York's future workforce.
 - Strengthened investment will allow CCR&Rs to provide critical family supports to currently underserved parents across New York State and to support the child care services so essential to New York's economic development.

QUALITYstarsNY

- **Develop and Fund a Cost-Effective Statewide, Tiered Quality Rating & Improvement System**
 - **Invest \$5M to expand QUALITYstarsNY in existing locations.** New York must invest \$5 million to show the state's commitment to quality and use support strategies, such as including the 35 Child Care Resource and Referral's (CCR&R) across the state in selection of QUALITYstarsNY regional hubs within the 10 Economic Development Regions.
 - **Include a quality framework - QUALITYstarsNY – in the implementation of statewide, universal, full-day Pre-K, with appropriate funding to do so.** The state's Pre-K expansion must ensure that not only are there more programs, but that those programs are of the highest quality. Sufficient resources should be put into a quality framework that will increase quality standards.

Child Care Subsidies

- **Invest an additional \$182 million in child care subsidies in 2014-2015, in addition to the \$916 million invested in 2013-14, to serve more than 25,000 additional children.** Expand that investment in years 2 through 5 to reach \$2.2 billion annually, providing universal access to the estimated 305,000 children of working parents who are currently in need of high-quality early learning.
 - Child care subsidies make quality child care more affordable, support the healthy development of children and help low-income parents access the child care they need to go to work or school to support their families.

The Early Care & Learning Council and Child Care Council, Inc. are members of Winning Beginning NY

Get Moving & Get Out!

By Tiffani McClain, Legally Exempt Enrollment Specialist

The month of April can be a very exciting month, one that is filled with holidays, special events and changes in nature. It is a time when everyone can finally begin to enjoy some warmer weather. Children have spent so much time indoors during the winter months and it is time to get outside! This is a time when children can have opportunities to strengthen growing muscles with climbing, running, playing ball and jumping.

Creating outdoor opportunities and activities that fit into every day schedules will help encourage children to get up and get out. Taking note of children's likes and dislikes before selecting activities and games will also prove success when planning. Acknowledging the children who are more sedentary than others and giving them encouraging activities versus forced activities, will also contribute to the ultimate goal. (For example, the child who seems to enjoy electronics and television when in his or her own home.) Giving them sidewalk chalk or a basketball to bounce on the sidewalk when outdoors, influences the child to become more active on a step by step basis while enabling the ability to make his or her own choices. Being active should be fun! The adults and children who are becoming active should not feel as if it is a job, it should be a fun way of becoming and staying healthy.

During the course of this month, children, parents and child care providers also have the opportunity to observe and discuss all the growing changes around them. "April Showers bring May Flowers." Not only are the children growing, but the natural surroundings around them are beginning to grow as well. Taking time to observe nature by going on walks in the community or short trips to the local park not only contribute to the objective of getting outdoors, but it also lends a hand in raising awareness of how important nature is to our everyday lives as well as ways to protect the earth we live in. With Earth Day approaching on April 22nd, planning for some active nature orientated fun would be right on schedule because as we all know a "healthy child is a happy child".





CACFP Is An Indicator of Quality Child Care

By Laurie Haley, Director of Nutrition & Environmental Education



The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a sign of professional quality child care. Through this program, child care providers receive nutrition education, training, and support services from their CACFP Sponsor that help them serve nutritious meals and create a positive eating environment for children.

Providers who participate in CACFP receive financial reimbursement that helps them to be able to afford to serve nutritionally complete foods.

Parents of children in child care are assured that their child receives high quality meals. With proper nutrition, a child is less likely to experience illness and fatigue and will develop at a normal physical and intellectual pace. Good nutrition is the recipe for an all-around happier child.

Children who are in child care with providers who participate in the CACFP are given the opportunity of nutrition education by providers who understand their role in shaping attitudes toward the acceptance of nutritious foods. Providers create an atmosphere that instills a positive, curious attitude about food from the earliest years.

As a CACFP Sponsor, Child Care Council encourages all providers to participate in this valuable nutrition program.

We thank the providers who currently participate with The Council, and we invite any provider who is not currently in CACFP to check us out!

Call Laurie Haley at 654-4753 to get more information and to register for our free orientation training, "Being Successful in CACFP"



Classes are 6:30pm—9:00pm unless otherwise noted

NYS Required Categories are listed in parenthesis () following the date.

Rochester Office:

4/1-5/8-(*) Starting Your Own Child Care Business 101
 4/1 & 3-(2,4,7) MAT 9:30am-2:30pm
 4/2-(1,3) Sugar, Spice and Everything Nice
 4/3 & 10-(3,4,5,7,8) Foundations of Secure and Safe School Age Programs
 4/7-MAT Skills Competency Demonstration 9:30am-12:30pm
 4/7-MAT Skills Competency Demonstration 6pm-9pm
 4/9-(1,2,4)-Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, 6:30pm-8pm
 4/9-(2,4,7) MAT Independent Study 9:30am-12:30pm
 4/12-(2,3) All in the Way You Cook It 9am-11:30am
 4/12-CPR & First Aid Sat. 9am-2pm
 4/22,24-(2,4) SPANISH CPR & First Aid
 4/23-Intro. to Family Child Care
 4/23-(2,4,7) MAT Independent Study 6pm-9pm
 4/26-(2,4,5) Make Your Child Care Eco-Healthy, Sat. 9am-11:30am
 4/29-(2) SPANISH Being Successful in CACFP

Lakeville:

4/5 & 12-(2,4,7) MAT Sats. 9am-2pm
 3/31-4/14-(1,2,3,4,5) Special Needs Series

Newark:

4/7-(Varies) Prof. Dev. Grp. 6:30pm-8:30pm
 4/9-5/21-(*) Starting Your Own Child Care Business 101
 4/24-(2,4,7) MAT Independent Study 6pm-9pm

Rochester Office:

5/1-(2,4,7) MAT Independent Study Class, 6pm-9pm
 5/5-6/16-(*) Starting Your Own Child Care Business 101
 5/7-(3,5) Environmental Ratings Scales-FCC
 5/10, 17-(2,4,7) MAT Training Sats. 9am-2pm
 5/10-(2,4) CPR & First Aid, Sat 9am-2pm
 5/13-(2,4,5) Asthma 101
 5/13-(7,8) Know Your Regulations-Centers
 5/12-(1,2,3) Get Kids Movin' and Groovin'
 5/13-Asthma 101
 5/15-(1,3,4) You Can't Say that to Me!
 5/15-MAT Skills Competency 6pm-9pm
 5/20,22,27,29 6/3-(1,2,3,4,5) SPANISH Special Needs Training Series
 5/20,27 & 6/3-School-Age Child Care Training Series
 5/22-(2,4,7) MAT Independent Study Class 9:30am-12:30pm
 5/28-(1,3,6) Happiest Baby on the Block
 5/31-MAT Skills Competency Demonstration Sat. 9am-Noon
 5/31 & 6/7-(2,4,7) SPANISH MAT 9am-3pm
 5/31-(2,4) CPR & First Aid, Sat 9am-2pm
Lakeville:
 5/10-(2,4) CPR & First Aid, Sat 9am-2pm
 5/20-6/26-(*) Starting Your Own Child Care Business 101
 5/28-MAT Skills Competency 6pm-9pm
Newark:
 5/5-(Varies) Prof. Dev. Grp. 6:30pm-8:30pm
 5/12-(2) Being Successful in CACFP
 5/29 & 6/3,5,10,12-(1,2,3,4,5) Special Needs Series

See the Jan-Jun 2014 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
- Introduction to CACFP
- Developing Your Program
- CPR & First Aid
- Business Class
- 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.

April

- 15th-Council of Child Care Administrators Meeting
- 30th-Child Care Council Staff Meeting-Rochester, closed 10am-12pm

May

- 20th-Council of Child Care Administrators Meeting
- 26th-Closed for Memorial Day
- 28th-Child Care Council Staff Meeting-Rochester, closed 10am-12pm

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/ccouncilinc/>

Meet the Staff of Child Care Council



Think Spring! My name is Jenn Mehlenbacher. I work at Child Care Council as the Livingston County Branch Office Coordinator and as a Registrar in Livingston and Monroe Counties. I have been with the council since July, 2007. I started out as a CACFP monitor and then moved to the Registration Services Department when the Livingston County Branch position became available about three years ago. I work with Registered Family Child Care Providers from the time they begin their initial application through the time they receive their registration. I provide trainings and support in completing applications. I

perform inspections of homes and enjoy providing intensive technical assistance to many of my providers. I am here to help you be successful. Please call on me if you need any support and stop in to the Lakeville office and say "Hello" if ever in the neighborhood! If you wish to make an appointment to meet me either in the Livingston or Monroe County office, please do not hesitate to call at 585-346-6086. I look forward to seeing you soon!

**A Closer Look****Who's At My Door?**

By Polly Ellstrom, Family & School Age Child Care Inspector

Beginning in 2014, the Child Care Council's Family Child Care Inspection Team is introducing a new process that will give Family Child Care Providers the opportunity to meet with their inspectors on a more consistent basis. This new home visiting plan is designed to provide Family Child Care providers with on-going support throughout the year. These visits are also designed to reduce some of the stress of the Annual Inspection appointment because they will be totally random and unannounced so there's no need to plan ahead or have a substitute available.



At each visit, your inspector will answer questions and discuss issues like the upcoming renewal dates of your First Aid and CPR certifications. The inspector will also inform you of any new programs, opportunities, or events that might be of interest to you and the families you serve. The inspector may also have some program supplies or materials to share.

These visits will provide you with the opportunity to ask any questions that you may have and to share the new program activities that you have introduced since the inspector's last visit. However, you can always call or email your Registrar directly if you have an urgent need for information and support between Inspector visits.

If you have questions about the new provider visiting plan, please feel free to call Mark Bradley at 585-654-3703 or email him at m.bradley@childcarecouncil.com. Mark is the Family and School Age Child Care Inspection Services Director and he will be happy to talk to you.



Legislation Increases Investments in Child Care

Following a series of roundtables last fall across the state by the Assembly Child Care Workgroup, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver today announced the intended passage of an extensive package of legislation to strengthen access to quality, affordable child care. The Speaker joined with members of the Workgroup to announce measures which would also increase funding for and enhance access to child care subsidies, establish paid family leave, and provide greater opportunities for training of child care providers.

"The Assembly Majority has a long history of putting families first, making it all the more vital that we address New York's current child care crisis, a move that is desperately needed and long overdue," Speaker Silver said. "The measures we are passing today truly make New York's families a priority and place crucial investments in a sound future for our children. The work that we are putting forth today would not have been possible without the tireless work of the members of our Child Care Workgroup, and I thank them for their continued leadership and unwavering perseverance as the Assembly works to increase access to quality child care programs and services."

The Child Care Workgroup includes Assemblymembers Catherine Nolan, Chair of the Education Committee; Carl Heastie, Chair of the Labor Committee; Michele Titus, Chair of the Social Services Committee; Aileen Gunther, Chair of the Mental Health Committee; Donna Lupardo, Chair of the Children and Families Committee; and Addie Russell, Chair of the Commission on Rural Resources.

A comprehensive package of reforms and investments was developed from recommendations included in a December 2013 report released by the Child Care Workgroup, following extensive research, roundtables and discussions between Workgroup members, parents, child care professionals and advocates. In addition to the legislation included in the package, the Assembly will increase funding for child care by nearly \$400 million over the next four years. This funding will increase the availability of child care slots for families up to 200% of the poverty level through an \$11 million annual investment in child care subsidies. Additionally, a one-time investment of \$11 million will enhance Facilitated Enrollment, a program that offers child care subsidies to working families earning up to 275% of the poverty level. This program also increases opportunities for families to access child care by expanding the number of accessible locations where they can apply for subsidized child care. The legislative measures include:

- Enactment of a paid family leave act that would enable all workers to maintain employment and still receive some income while on leave to care for an elderly relative, manage an unanticipated medical emergency or bond with a newborn or adopted child. Currently, the federal Family Medical Leave Act provides for 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a sick relative, however, most employees cannot afford to take unpaid leave from work. Allowing employees to earn some income during a brief leave can prevent financial disaster. Under this measure, employers will be required to purchase paid family leave insurance policy, the cost of which will be offset by an initial weekly employee contribution of up to 45 cents (A.1793-B Nolan);
- Legislation limiting the co-pay for child care subsidies to 20 percent. Currently, families receiving child care subsidies are subject to a co-pay determined by the local social services district that can be as high as 35 percent of household income above the federal poverty level. This measure includes an annual state investment of \$70 million for four years to pay local districts for the funding shortfall (A.8928/Russell);

- Revising the formula for determining household income to make it consistent with other public assistance programs. Income earned by individuals under the age of 18 will no longer be considered part of the household income; an investment of \$2.5 Million (A.1077-A/Jaffee);
- Reimbursing child care providers for absences of children receiving child care subsidies, helping to ensure quality care. Currently, local social services districts are authorized, at their discretion, to reimburse providers for these absences, often leaving the providers with an additional financial burden that can ultimately lead to difficulties retaining staff and less-than-optimal care; an investment of \$6.3 million (A.8926",2014);?>/Rosa);
- Reducing financial shortfalls for providers by aligning reimbursement rates with current licensing standards for children up to two years of age, an investment of \$5.3 million (A.8927/Simotas);
- Ensuring that parents who voluntarily separate from employment to meet child care obligations are not disqualified from unemployment benefits for which they otherwise qualify (A. 8919/Heastie);
- Easing work search requirements to better aid parents who are currently unemployed and searching for work but may also have lost child care as a result of losing their job (A. 8920/Solages);
- Exempting parents that are receiving public assistance and are also required to meet work search and job training requirements from meeting such requirements until their child reaches 12 months of age when a local district cannot meet the demands for child care. This measure would ultimately make more child care funding available for other working families (A.6839-A/Titus);
- Calling for local districts to provide 60 days notification to families prior to lowering child care eligibility or raising the co-payment in order to better allow parents to meet child care obligations (A.8918/Peoples-Stokes);
- Increasing access to and awareness of training programs and professional development activities for providers by requiring the Child Care Resource and Referral agencies to provide legally exempt providers with this information at the time of enrollment and annual re-enrollment (A.8922/Lupardo);
- Allowing providers the ability to post their completed training and credentialing achievements on the New York State Office of Children and Family Services website, which will enhance the current database, helping to bolster the credibility of providers and aid parents in their search for quality child care. (A.8923/Mayer);
- Establishing the Early Learning Council (ELC) to secure support for public and private investment in early learning for children up to the age of five. The ELC would be comprised of the commissioners of the Office of Children and Family Services, State Education Department, Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance and Empire State Development Corporation as well as representatives of the business community appointed by the Governor, the Speaker of the Assembly and the Temporary President of the Senate (A.8921/Lupardo);
- Establishing a taskforce to review administrative and regulatory requirements of all state agencies governing child care programs with the goal of eliminating duplicative processes and streamlining requirements (A.8924/Gunther);
- Requiring each district to maintain waiting lists for child care slots, as well as the income of persons receiving subsidies (A.2581/Scarborough); and
- Calling for local districts to develop a simplified application for persons applying only for child care assistance (A.8925/Barrett).