

RCMA HOY

We Can Make A World Of
Difference

Helping Our Youth



October 1993 OUR MISSION: Helping Parents Restart, Giving Kids a Head Start, Helping Staff Develop

FROM THE DESK OF BARBARA

I know that among all our staff there are many wonderful personal or job-related success stories that the rest of us would love to hear about.

Perhaps after much effort, you were able to buy a house, or maybe you graduated your last son from high school, or your daughter won a scholarship to college.

Maybe you just had your twenty-fourth grandchild, or your daughter began a career that she has always been dreaming about.

Perhaps you had some great achievement in your own life or you just completed ten years with RCMA.

You are really excited about some wonderful event that might have recently occurred in your family's life or in your own life.

If there is something that you would like to share with us, please call Gerry Lambert at the State office (1-800-282-6540) so that we can all celebrate your successes in **RCMA Hoy**

Any story that you have to tell is worth telling if you are really happy about it. Let us know!

COMING EVENTS

Nov. 3 and 4 - Migrant Head Start Center Team Retreat for late opening centers. Cedarkirk. Lithia

Nov. 10 and 11 - AC/PC Leadership Retreat. Cedarkirk. Lithia

PERSONAL PROFILE

In a veil of darkness, she sets off to her place of work. It's only 5:30 a.m. but she needs to get a start on the day.

I was at the staff Christmas party, in a room filled with people at the Villa Bella restaurant.

Well, considering she will be preparing breakfast for 200 children and 35 adults. Ernestina Cruz, the Cook at Immokalee Child Development Center, has an important task at hand.

I was seated and I felt something rubbing on my leg.

Ernestina arrives at the center before anyone else. It is still dark and quiet. So after turning on the light, she turns on the radio to her favorite radio station. Breaking the early-morning silence, the Mexican music keeps her company and sets the pace until help arrives around 6:30 a.m.

I got up and I was walking around, but the rubbing sensation did not leave my leg. It persisted in its subtle way.

As Ernestina, married for forty years and soon to celebrate her 60th birthday, flips the last tortilla, she smiles knowing that the kids enjoy her cooking. "What I love most is making food that I know the children will really like."

Finally, innocently and without drawing any attention, I lifted up my dress ever so slightly . . .

She also takes comfort in knowing that the children are getting two nutritionally balanced and healthy meals and a healthy snack each day while at RCMA.

. . . and believe it or not, underneath my dress I still had on my skirt which was supposed to have stayed at home when I changed into my dress earlier that afternoon.

The pace quickens as breakfast dishes are washed and baked chicken and broccoli-- Ernestina's favorite dish--are prepared for lunch.

I didn't want to move because, embarrassed as I was, I thought someone might make this same discovery. It wasn't something I wanted to advertise publicly or even talk about openly. I preferred to keep it hidden. However, not having been in a similar "predicament" before, at least that I can remember, I wasn't too sure how to handle it. So I turned to

Juanita -- the understanding type -- who was nearby and I explained my situation, asking her advice.

"Ernestina, line one." sounds over the intercom. It's a cook from a center in Farm Worker Village calling for advice on a recipe. "I am happy to help the cooks in the other centers. A lot has been given to me. So it's good to be able to give something back." Ernestina said.

We went for the nearest chairs to sit down and give some serious thought to this situation. I really needed empathy at this point. Well, within a few seconds we were both laughing almost uncontrollably, though not too loudly.

After snack has been prepared, it's time for Ernestina's least favorite part of her job -- the blue book -- in which she enters figures and totals the number of meals served and other good stuff. "At least I have a calculator to help." she said.

After a short while of much laughter and some serious thought, we decided that I should make a break for the door. With Juanita shielding me from behind

so to keep this secret between just us two, we went for the exit.

With Ernestina's work day ending at 2 p.m., she gets a needed break, which is consumed by her favorite soap opera. It's dinner time, time to start cooking again. She wonders if she should make extra for her four sons and two daughters; oh, and what about the 19 grandchildren. They like her cooking too.

I guess I was in a hurry to get to the Christmas party.

We thank you, Ernestina, for many dedicated years and for a job well done!



Television: The Less, The Better

Television is magic. It soothes us when we are tired, it becomes a baby-sitter when we are busy. It distracts, amuses, frightens, informs. But television does a lot of other things which are not good for us or our children.

Television does not improve language ability. T.V. is passive. It does not require a response. No

expressive language is used by watchers of T.V. Television doesn't respond or correct our speech. People need feedback to improve. Language, dialects and accents do not change as a result of watching T.V. If they did, everyone across the U.S. would be speaking the same way.

There is a correlation between being overweight and watching T.V. In other words, the more T.V. one watches, the heavier one is likely to be.

There is a negative correlation between family time and watching T.V. In other words, the more T.V. one watches, the less time one spends with her family.

There is a negative correlation between homework and T.V. In other words, the more T.V. one watches, the less homework one gets done (and the poorer the quality and the lower the grades in school).

Watching T.V. causes impatience. Television watchers rarely seek alternative solutions. They show a lack of tolerance for

unresolved problems. They think all of life's problems should be resolved in a half hour, just like on T.V. Television watchers show an inability to accept and resolve conflicts in life. Life is magic, too. Turn off the television!

Reprinted from Visions, (Volume II, Issue 5), the newsletter of the Preschool Coordination Project

Television: Lo menos, Lo mejor

La television es mágica. Nos arruya cuando estamos cansados. Cuando estamos ocupados, nos sirve para hacerle compañía a los niños, nos distrae, nos alegra, nos asusta, nos informa. Desafortunadamente la television hace muchas cosas que no son buenas para nosotros ni para los niños.

La television nos ayuda un poquito a desarrollar el lenguaje. Ella es pasiva y no requiere una respuesta. Los que miren television no tienen que expresarse, ya que la television no requiere una respuesta: por eso no hay manera de corregir el lenguaje. El lenguaje, los dialectos, y los acentos de las personas, no cambian debido a que ven television, si ayudara, todo el pais hablarian igual.

Hay una relacion entre engordar y ver la television, en otras palabras, entre mas vemos television, mas engordamos. Al igual, hay una relacion negativa entre tiempo con la familia y tiempo con la television. Entre mas vemos television, menos tiempo que pasamos con la familia.

Hay una relacion negativa entre la television y la tarea. En otras palabras, si uno ve más television, termina menos la tarea (y de peor calidad). El resultado sería calificaciones mas bajas.

El ver la television causa impaciencia. Los que ven demasiada television raramente buscan soluciones o alternativas para resolver sus problemas. Estas personas demuestran falta de tolerancia hacia problemas que son dificiles de resolver. Ellas piensan que todos los problemas deberian de resolverse en media hora, igual que en la television.

Estas personas tambien demuestran que no pueden aceptar y resolver sus conflictos en la vida real. Acuérdense! La vida tambien es magica. Apagen la television!

Tomado de Visions, (Volume II, Issue 5), the newsletter of the Preschool Coordination Project.



THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

1. Build trust with the parents and treat them with the same respect that you want them to give you.
2. Say the parents' name every time you talk with them.
3. Each time as you begin have a fun warm-up activity that involves all parents in saying a few words or doing something, including introducing themselves.
4. Have parent activities that involve the parents so that they don't just sit and listen.
5. Keep the information on parents' level and present it a little at a time.
6. Make the activities fun whenever possible. It makes learning easier and interesting.
7. Don't assume parents know how to get involved in the activity. Give clear instructions and ask the parents if they understand. "Remember what it was like not to know yourself."
8. Be sure to include activities or topics that the parents request themselves - a family-centered approach. Ask parents for ideas regularly.
9. Parents, as parents, have lots of information and ideas to share. Make sure they are given the chance to do so.
10. Tell parents in a positive way that we appreciate them. What they do does make a difference, not only for their child and themselves, but for the whole center.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

In an effort at promoting ongoing career development of staff and parents and its importance, the Career Development Committee, made up of staff throughout the state and some parents, met recently.

Many exciting things are planned for this season. The goals it hopes are achieved this year are the following:

- 1) Career Development of staff and parents.
- 2) Complete By-Laws for the Career Development Committee.
- 3) Use training presentations as an opportunity to increase staff and parent literacy.
- 4) Identify the various skill areas of people within RCMA and make those specialists available throughout the state.
- 5) Develop career branches and establish necessary steps to achieve career goals.

It is the desire of the committee that all centers will continue to join in the effort to increase adult literacy and information on career opportunities for staff and parents

To help achieve these goals sub-committees were set up. And these sub-committees will be sharing their ideas and progress in future editions of **RCMA Hoy**.

Editor: Gerard Lambert

**Contributing Writers: Jean Eklund
Leslie Moguil**

Please send suggestions, comments, and letters to the editor to:

**RCMA Hoy Editor, 219 N. First St.,
Immokalee, FL 33934**

OF SUCCESSFUL PARENT INVOLVEMENT