



RCMA HOY

We Can Make
A World of
Difference

Helping Our Youth



FEBRUARY 1996 Issue 35

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



**FROM
THE
DESK
OF
BARBARA**

**In a quality center
children learn to feel
good about
themselves and
express themselves
using language**

It's February and we are in full swing at RCMA. A lot is going on. Sometimes it feels like too much.

Monitorings, meetings, evaluations, transition to school support groups, and so on.

So let me get you back to basics--what is quality?

What matters at RCMA is that we provide a safe and loving place for children and their families.

A place where parents are treated the way we want others to treat us. A place

If your center or program meets the basics of quality--safety and love, then don't worry about the rest. Everything will be fine.

where staff treat each other as they wish to be treated. A place where children learn to feel good about themselves and learn to express themselves using language.

A safe place for everyone. That's quality.

If your center or program meets these basics, then don't worry about the rest--everything will be fine.

After spending a few days recently working alongside of teachers, I have renewed respect for the work they do with the children.

We all need to help each other remember the basics.

We are making a difference.

It's never too late

By LESLIE MOGUIL
Staff Writer

It's never too late to do anything.

That's what Rebeca Millan, Education Coordinator at Fred Dennis Child Development Center in Wauchula thought as she recorded one of her goals on her 1994 Career Development Plan.



Photo By GERARD LAMBERT

Rebeca Millan

Rebeca's goal at 29 was to get her driver license. Born in Puerto Rico, Rebeca made her first attempt to learn with her learner permit at 18.

Her mom was her first teacher, a Volvo

PLEASE SEE MILLAN. PAGE 3

En un centro de calidad, los niños aprenden a sentirse bien de ellos mismos y se expresan usando lenguaje

DEL ESCRITORIO DE BARBARA

Ses febrero y estamos a todo galope en RCMA. Mucho esta pasando. A veces sentimos que es demasiado.

Inspecciones, juntas, evaluaciones, grupos de apoyo para la transición escolar y mucho mas.

Por eso, voy a hablar de lo basico. ¿Que es la calidad?

Lo importante de RCMA es que proporcionemos un lugar seguro y amoroso para los niños y sus familias.

Un lugar donde se tratan a los

padres como a nosotros nos gusta que nos traten. Un lugar donde los empleados se tratan unos a otros como desean ser tratados. Un lugar donde los niños aprenden a sentirse bien de ellos mismos y se expresan usando lenguaje.

Un lugar seguro para todos--eso es calidad.

Si tu centro o programa llena estos requisitos basicos, no se preocupen por lo demás--todo estará bien.

Despues de trabajar unos dias al lado de unas maestras, tengo un nuevo respecto por el trabajo que ellas hacen con nuestros niños.

Todos necesitamos recordar lo basico.

Hacemos una diferencia.

Safety News

A positive attitude makes all the difference

When you are enthusiastic about your job, show concern, and have a positive attitude . . . you become a much more appreciated individual.

Care and attitude are two of the more important aspects of your job. They not only affect the way you do your job but also have a definite relationship on your mental health.

Have you ever noticed how much energy you have for the things you enjoy doing? It has been proved that people who perform with a certain positive attitude are more safety conscious, work more efficiently and have a healthier outlook.

Safety means approaching your job with confidence, doing things the right way, the safe way and with concern for others.

When you are enthusiastic about your job, show concern and have a positive attitude, you not only make a better employee but also become a much more appreciated individual.

There is nothing so contagious as enthusiasm--if everyone makes the effort. Don't be someone who just has a job. The proper attitude--the safe attitude--will show that you care.

Attitude makes the difference in the quality of care we give our children and their self-esteem.

A positive attitude can play a big role in all of our lives. We can accomplish all the things we attempt in a safe manner.

Remember -- your attitude matters.

APPLAUSE

Pasco/Lake/Orange Area

Congratulations to Hulda Lopez, lead teacher, Hermelinda Maydon, teacher trainee and Sandra Medina, bus aide, of Zellwood Child Development Center on receiving their high school diplomas.

Staff raised money at a Spring Literacy Carnival last season. Books were purchased with the money and went home with staff over the summer.

The fact that classes were offered in Spanish was a big help to everyone.

Homestead/Florida City Area

Congratulations to Enedelia Garcia, lead teacher at South Dade Pre who recently received her high school diploma. Enedelia has been attending night classes for over a year.

Immokalee Area

Congratulations to Sylvia Faz, teacher at Immokalee Child Development Center Annex, on the purchase of her first home.

State Office

Jean Eklund, program development specialist, is very proud of her son Erik. Erik was chosen to take part in a mock legislative session in Tallahassee in February.

The session is part of the YMCA's Youth In Government program.

Erik and other members of the delegation introduced a series of mock bills to the Collier County Commission. They debated the bills' value and heard a panel of community and elected leaders critique their presentations.

Perhaps we can look forward to casting our vote for Erik Coxwell in the near future.

Troubles are like babies--they only grow if you nurse them.

It's never too late

MILLAN, from page 1

her first car. Her mom was a bit nervous, so Rebeca vowed, "I'm not going to practice again until I have my own car."

At 22 Rebeca was married and living in New York City. Time for a new learner permit, and a new teacher—her husband.

They practiced a little, but the brakes were not so good. Both she and her husband were nervous about her driving this car.

At the beginning of the 1994 season Rebeca transferred from Avon Park Head Start to Fred Dennis, about 20 miles from her home.

"That's it," she said, "I have to learn to drive this summer!"

She did and with the help of her first teacher, her mom.

She received her Florida driver license in August 1994.

She felt free on that day.

HAPPENINGS

Highlands/Hardee Area

Marjorie Thomas, lead teacher at Avon Park Head Start, was attending classes at South Florida Community College, pursuing an A.S. degree in Early Childhood Development.

Her instructor was so impressed with her knowledge that she recommended that Marjorie teach a session on "Classroom activities for toddlers."

Marjorie will be teaching the class in June.

How does a lead teacher get to this level?

Lots of determination and a willingness to learn and grow. Lead teachers in this area are doing just that at monthly lead teachers workshops organized by program coordinator, Charlene Edwards.

The two hour workshops, held monthly at rotating centers, have included the following topics: make-n-

take holiday activities, leadership styles and Myers-Briggs individual awareness activities.

Homestead/Florida City Area

Frank Lozada, who has been the director of the South Dade Early Intervention Program, left this school age program in January to work on his career development.

Frank received a scholarship for a graduate program in recreational therapy. Upon completion of this study, he will receive a masters degree. Frank made a positive impact during his short stint with RCMA. We wish him well in this exciting challenge.

Immokalee Area

Laquita Prudent, a teacher at Immokalee Child Development Center Pre, is working on her CDA.

She shared her autobiography with her advisor so she could get some pointers. Her advisor thought her feelings about her dream of receiving her high school diploma after dropping out in ninth grade were perfect as is.

In fact, she asked Laquita if her story could be shared with the RCMA Literacy Council.

Laquita's response was "if it can help someone else, sure go right ahead."

Gadsden Area

Congratulations to Mary Dawkins, a teacher at Gadsden County Migrant Head Start in Quincy, who received her CDA equivalent.

Pasco/Lake/Orange Area

Dade City Migrant Head Start was visited by the Ambassador of Mexico to the United States, Jesus Silva-Herzog in early February. In addition to touring the center, the ambassador gained greater insight of the situation of migrants by visiting migrant camps and the fields.

The Dade City Center was also chosen by the Mexican consulate to receive funding for a teacher to teach folklorique dance and other aspects of the Mexican culture, including the making of Mexican candy. The teacher will offer this enriching experience to the staff two days per week from March to May.

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Oftentimes, going the extra mile is what sets great teachers apart from good ones. Pamela Wigfall, infant room lead teacher at Dade City Migrant Head Start,

Continued on next page



CONGRATULATIONS to newlywed Gabriela Garcia, outreach worker for the Redlands and South Dade centers in Homestead and her husband Jesus Mosqueda. For their honeymoon they went to Key Largo, Orlando and South Carolina.

We wish Gabriela and her husband a happy marriage.

Gabriela is working on her Associates degree from Miami-Dade Community College.

HAPPENINGS

is that type of teacher.

Pam is always willing to go the extra mile and on numerous occasions she has assisted with the transportation of parents to hospital appointments. Recently, a child from her classroom was hospitalized with pneumonia and twice after work Pam went to see the child and also helped the family through donations.

The Dade City Center is proud of a good team spirit and staff like Pam serve as an example of the great team they have.

Putnam Area

Mary Clements, teacher at Ragsdale center, lost her home and all of her belongings in a fire on January 8. Fortunately, no one was hurt. The fire started in the chimney that needed to be cleaned out. In addition, Olga Artegas, a Crescent City center teacher also

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

If more students were to come to kindergarten prepared like the children from RCMA, the world would be a better place. —Tracy Balster, Belle Glade Elementary kindergarten teacher.

Dear Hoy,

Our transition activities at the Belle Glade and New Hope (Pahokee) centers are going great with our elementary schools.

Our teachers and support staff are doing a great job working with our children who will attend Pre-K and Kindergarten next year.

In fact, Tracy Balster, a

kindergarten teacher from Belle Glade Elementary said, "If more students were to come to kindergarten prepared like the children from RCMA, the world would be a better place."

Signed,

Corey Wilkerson

Belle Glade/Pahokee Family Support Worker

lost her home due to a fire. The cause of the fire has not been clearly established but faulty wiring in the water heater is suspected. May we all be reminded to be careful at home if we see smoke or smell a suspicious odor.

Delray Beach center celebrates teacher appreciation week

Event underscores importance of teachers

TEACHERS ARE IMPORTANT!

This is the message that teachers received at Farmworker Child Development Center in Delray Beach.

This center celebrated "Teacher Appreciation Week" one week in January, the activities of which underscored the importance of teachers and the need to show them appreciation.

This event began with decorations including a "thank you" banner and individually wrapped goodies for each teacher.

During the entire week the teachers were surprised with more goodies and special attention. On Friday, a big celebration included a luncheon for all the staff who received a rose and a gift of candy and cologne.

This second annual event, held Jan. 22-26, was sponsored by the Junior League of Boca Raton.

SENSITIVITY TO

CHILDREN: That is one of Eva Maldonado's greatest strengths as a caregiver for one-year-olds at Indian River Migrant Head Start in Fellsmere.

Eva is loving with the children and is always available to parents when they come into the classroom. She is very sensitive to the needs of parents as well.

Eva, who has her CDA, has been a teacher at this Indian River center since the season it opened six years ago. Eva is learning English.

Photo By GERARD LAMBERT



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