



RCMA HOY

Redlands Christian Migrant Association

We Can Make
A World of
Difference

Helping Our Youth



August 1999

Issue 76

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

Early experiences open future doors

By Mike Clark
Staff Writer

Children need creativity for more than planning their next art project. They need creativity for planning their future. You might think it silly to talk about 1st graders planning their future, but they get excited about it.

RCMA's Immokalee Summer Program provides school-age children a chance to start thinking about their future. The 50 children range from preschool to 3rd grade. The children have been very busy experiencing the world in a hands-on way. They have visited different job sites and offices in town. One of the places they visited this summer was Florida Rural Legal Services.

They talked to people about what they do in their jobs. They ask them about what they earn and what they had to study to get the jobs. They realize that there are lots of choices they can make as they grow up. Children begin to see possibilities other than what they already knew.

Children who might have thought that they would be a truck driver, now might say that they would like to be a lawyer. Their creativity is sparked by more than just career choices. The group went to a Naples Philharmonic concert, and a Asian Giant Puppet Theatre performance in Fort Myers. Josh Rincon said that the RCMA group was represented the only minority group at the concert.

The children are able to experience cultures, communities and events that may not be part of their daily lives. They see other ways to live,



A DAY AT THE THEATRE: Children from Immokalee's School Age Summer Program eagerly await the start of a performance. Seated at the historic Arcade Theatre in downtown Fort Myers the children participated the New Arts Festival by attending the Bits & Pieces giant puppet show production of an Asian tale of Cinderella.

work and play. They become more aware of the world.

Children who see a reason for going to school will stay in school. Children who know the consequences of doing well in school will do better. The consequence is that they will have a chance to choose what they want to do as adults.

We are very good at giving children choices in the classroom. We know choices are important. As teachers, we can create many opportunities for children to learn about the choices and the consequences of good choices. The Immokalee summer program is an example of giving children choices can make with their lives and futures.

I have seen the smiles on the kids this summer in Immokalee. I know that RCMA makes a good choice in having the program!

DEL ESCRITORIO DE OLGA

FROM THE DESK OF OLGA



"I think many times as adults we are quick to point the finger and accuse, whether it is at work or in our personal lives."

"Me impresiono porque muchas veces como adultos estamos muy listos para apuntar con el dedo y acusar, ya sea en nuestros trabajos o en nuestra vida privada"

Knowledge comes from the most unexpected places

J was recently involved in interviewing potential candidates for a high school principal position in Immokalee. I was part of a very large interview team, made up of mostly school administrators. One of the questions asked of the candidates was, "What role will you play in the discipline process with students?"

One of the candidates answers really impressed me. "I plan to be there with the Dean of Discipline, not to look over their shoulder, but to be directly involved in the process. Then I will ask the student to read the rules and regulations booklet. Afterwards, I will ask, Did you do something to break these rules? I feel that this process helps the student take responsibility for his/her actions without having me have to point them out. It has been very successful. Usually students will not return to be disciplined."

His response impressed me because, I think many times as adults we are quick to point the finger and accuse, whether it is at work or in our personal lives. And instead of having a positive chat with good positive results, we end up with negative results and hurt feelings. The idea makes so much sense to me that I am going to try and practice the same procedure.

I too, believe it is a good process to implement!

Olga Hernandez, Deputy Director

El conocimiento viene de lugares menos esperados

Estuve envuelta en un proceso para entrevistar personal para la posición de principal en una escuela secundaria. Una de las preguntas fue, que papel vas a desarrollar o tomar tu en el proceso de disciplina, como principal?

La contestación que me impresiono mucho fue "yo pienso estar allí con el 'Dean de Disciplina' y estar directamente envuelto con el proceso. Luego quiero pedirle al estudiante que lea, en mi presencia, el libro de reglamento. Después le preguntare hiciste algo para quebrantar este reglamento? Este proceso hace que la persona tome responsabilidad por sus propios actos sin que yo tenga que decirlo. Ha sido muy efectivo. Por costumbre el estudiante no regresa a la oficina para ser disciplinado."

Me impresiono porque muchas veces como adultos estamos muy listos para apuntar con el dedo y acusar, ya sea en nuestros trabajos o en nuestra vida privada. Y en vez de ser una plática positiva con buenos resultados salen enojos, cosas negativas y sentimientos lastimados. Voy a tratar de usar el mismo método.

Creo que es un buen proceso para poner en práctica.

Olga Hernandez, Directora Deputiva



Portrait of a Teacher

Bernice Ridley was born in Mississippi and moved to Arcadia at the age of 12. She worked in the citrus groves throughout her school years and took care of her five younger brothers and sisters.

When she started her own family, her sister needed help, so she helped raise six neices and nephews along with their own children. When her children reached school age, Bernice started to

work at RCMA. That was over 14 years ago. As a child care professional, she has succeeded in nurturing her own education. Bernice has attained her Child Development Associate credential and recently received her High School Equivalency Diploma.

Bernice has a special gift when it comes to caring for children. She is always smiling and can handle the most challenging children with patience and kindness. Bernice is an inspiration to her co-workers and represents the heart and soul of RCMA.

HOY Staff Writer honored with appointment to State Council

Mike Clark was named to serve on the State Coordinating Council for School Readiness. The group serves as an advisory arm to the Florida Partnership for School Readiness and was created through new legislation to review and approve local coalition plans, and adopt, maintain and coordinate programmatic, administrative and fiscal policies and standards for all school readiness programs, allowing flexibility.



PARENTING IN ACTION: Mike Clark, unit member, HOY Staff Writer, and soon to be HOY Parent News Editor is seen here carrying out his most important job – the role of DAD! His daughter, Kayla helps dad decide if the post, for her new playhouse is set just right. Both eyeball the leveler in an attempt to benefit from what the tool is telling them.

RCMA EAR Benefit Changes Name, Expands Focus

Are you caring for an elder parent? Losing control of your teenager? Do you have money problems or need legal advice? If you need help or support on these or many other issues that influence your well-being at home or at work contact LifeBalance now.

LifeBalance is an RCMA Benefit that many of us are not tapping into. They provide access to free, confidential assistance with all the issues of daily living...24 hours a day, every day. Do not ignore this great free resource! **CALL TOLL FREE 1-800-811-2849. The Spanish call center number is 1-888-500-3247.**

Rain forest takes root in Delray Beach

By Mary Espinoza
Center Coordinator, Farmworker CDC

The preschool teachers sat down to do their planning. They wanted something different, exciting, interesting and appealing to the children, that would also reflect the theme. After discussing their idea with the Paula Rounsavall, they decided to create a rainforest in the preschool playground! The finished results were unbelievable.

When you take a walk through the rain forest you see beautiful tropical plants, trees, and flowers. There are alligators peeping out from the green shrubbery, snakes are curled around tree branches and on the ground. There are many species of birds and butterflies, insects, spiders and lizards. An iguana peeping up from underneath the tree.

The entire time that you are walking through the forest, a mist of rain can be felt on your skin. Finally you arrive at the most vibrant of scenes, a sparkling waterfall, like diamonds, with water streaming down to your feet. And the sounds, the sounds of birds and animals who call the rain forest home.

This multisensory creation has been enjoyed by all of the children, teachers, visitors, volunteers, neighborhood school children and parents, many of whom are from Central America and the Caribbean.

Out of the enthusiasm created teachers expanded learning activities to include: sorting and matching plastic insects, painting nature scenes, making butterflies, charting forest animals and reading plenty of books about colorful snakes, insects, trees and butterflies.


Thanks to Paula and teachers, Noraida Rivera, Marceleino Cepepda, and Silvia Chamul whose determination, imagination and hard work made the rain forest a learning experience for all.



SPARKLING FALLS DRAW THE EXPLORERS NEAR: Three preschoolers are surrounded by the sights and sounds of the rain forest. A wide brimmed hat protects them from elements of nature and the mist produced by the sweltering heat of the forest.

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APPLAUSE

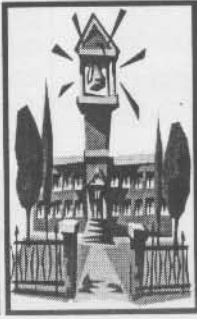
 Congratulations to Rosalinda Arevalo and Alicia DeLaRosa, both work with the RCMA Caring For Kids Program. The program helps Family Child Care Home Providers be the best they can be! Rosie and Alicia were accepted into the Train the Trainer Program given at the National Family Child Care Conference in Denver. After completing the training they will be better equipped to observe and provide feedback to Family Child Care providers in order to strengthen the quality of care that they lovingly provide!

Congratulations to Benatelia Canas who passed her citizenship exam in Miami. She looks forward to her official swearing in.

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Please send suggestions, comments, and Letters to the Editor to the following address:
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402 West Main Street, Immokalee, FL 34142

Any time, any day, any problem
When you need someone to talk to,
LifeBalance is there.
1-800-811-2849



Time to Begin the New School Year!
Make the effort to get involved in your child's school.

PARENT NEWS

Issue 21
July/August 1999

SUPPORT WORKS BOTH WAYS

PARENT SENDS: LETTER OF APPRECIATION

Avon Park:

Hello, My name is Rebecca Martin. I'm 27 years of age and I have one daughter who attends RCMA Head Start Program.

I feel that the RCMA program is very helpful because I myself am a single parent and being disabled trying to raise 2 children and one on the way can be hard. Most months I don't need any help from anyone but when I did, the RCMA program was right there to help me. I find that very assuring. When you need something, RCMA could be right there to give a helping hand.

As for the Head Start part of the program, I find it very fulfilling for my daughter. She's learned lots of things, like her colors and numbers, and how to play with other children. I'm sure that when she starts Kindergarten she will be well prepared for the tasks that will be placed before her.

I find that the staff at the school is just wonderful. They are very kind, friendly and they treat you as you want to be treated.

I myself have learned that by going to the "lapsit" (fun activities that the center organizes on a monthly basis for parents to enjoy), it makes my daughter feel very good. It also lets me know that I care enough to be there for her.

But to sum up the way I feel about the RCMA Head Start program is that if there was no program, a lot of children would be just out of luck. They would miss out on a lot of hugs and kisses and information. Thank you.

Rebecca Martin
Avon Park

CENTER THANKS: CROSS-STITCH CHAMPION

Pomona Park:

When McKenna Mitchell, 4, comes to school, she often brings handmade presents her mother, Mrs. Benese Mitchell sends with her to the center.

Some of the donated cross-stitched items are: Kleenex box covers, matching picture games, pencil holders, a mail box and a variety of toys.

Recently, McKenna brought in a colorful wreath put together of many cross-stitched items representing pencils, crayons, a ruler, note paper and a sign "2teach is 2touch lives 4ever". It now adorns one of the classroom doors.

McKenna will be entering Kindergarten this fall. Thank you, Mrs. Mitchell! We will miss McKenna and your contributions!

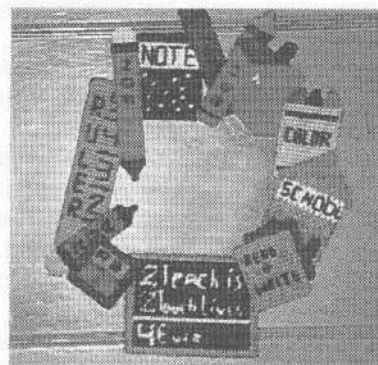


Photo by Irene Brammertz
Left: Wreath handmade by Mrs. Benese Mitchell and donated to Pomona Park Child Development Center

Editor: Irene G. Brammertz – Spanish Translation: Jorge Velazquez
Please send future parent success stories (with photos) to the new editor, Mike Clark at:

RCMA Parent News Editor,
105 S. 8th Avenue, Wauchula, FL 33873
Fax: 941-773-2202 / Phone: 941-773-4470

NOTICIAS DE PADRES

Número 21
Julio/Agosto 1999

EL APOYO TRABAJA EN DOS DIRECCIONES

PADRE ENVIA:
CARTA DE APRECIACION

CENTRO AGRADECE:
CAMPEONA DE PUNTO DE CRUZ

Avon Park:

Hóla, Mi nombre es Rebecca Martin. Yo tengo 27 años de edad y tengo una hija que asiste al Programa de Head Start de RCMA.

Yo siento que el programa de RCMA es muy útil, porque como madre soltera e incapacitada tratar de criar a 2 niños y con otro más en el camino, puede ser duro. La mayoría del tiempo no necesité ningún tipo de ayuda, pero cuando lo hice, el programa de RCMA se encontraba allí para ayudarme. Encuentro eso muy tranquilizante. Cuando usted necesite algo, RCMA podría estar allí para dar una mano de ayuda.

En cuanto a la parte del programa de Head Start, yo lo encuentro muy satisfactorio para mi hija. Ella ha aprendido infinidad de cosas, como los colores, además de los números y cómo jugar con otros niños. Estoy segura que cuando ella comience el Jardín de Niños, ella estará suficientemente bien preparada para las tareas que le pongan.

Encuentro que el personal en la escuela es maravilloso. Ellos son muy amables, amistosos y ellos lo tratan como usted quiere ser tratado.

Yo misma he aprendido esto, asistiendo al "lapsit" (actividades divertidas que el centro organiza mensualmente para diversión de los padres), esto hace que mi hija se sienta muy bien. Me permite también saber que me preocupa lo suficiente para estar allí para ella.

Pero para resumir la manera que yo me siento acerca del programa de Head Start de RCMA es que si no existiera el programa, muchos niños no tendrían la suerte y estarían perdiendo muchos besos y abrazos e información.

Gracias.

Rebecca Martin
Avon Park

Pomona Park:

Cuando McKenna Mitchell, de 4 años, viene a la escuela, ella, a menudo, nos trae algunos regalos hechos a mano por su madre, la Sra. Benese Mitchell que con cariño envía al centro.

Algunos de los artículos de costura en punto de cruz, donados son: las cubiertas de caja de toallitas desechables, los juegos de fotografías iguales, contenedores de lápices, una caja de correo y una variedad de juguetes.

Recientemente, McKenna trajo una corona en punto de cruz, muy colorida, pues en ella puso lápices, colores, reglas y una nota de papel que decía "Enseñar es a tocar una vida para siempre". Ahora adorna una de las puertas de un salón.

McKenna estará entrando el Jardín de Niños este Otoño. ¡Gracias, Sra. Mitchell! ¡Extrañaremos a McKenna y sus contribuciones!

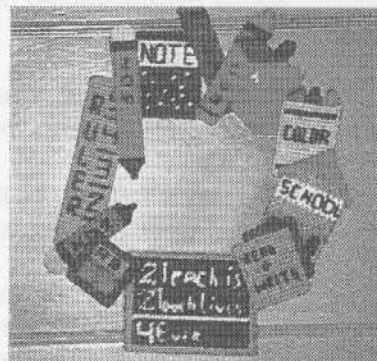


Foto por Irene Brammertz
Izq.: Corona hecho a mano por la Sra. Benese Mitchell que fue donada a Pomona Park Child Development Center.

Editor: Irene G. Brammertz – Traducción Español: Jorge Velazquez
Favor en el futuro de enviar historias de éxito de familias (con fotos) a Mike Clark, el nuevo redactor, a:

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