Arkansas Childrens Week 2011

Let's Explore Science!

Arkansas Children's Week 2011

Planning Toolkit

Welcome to the Arkansas Children's Week Planning Toolkit! This toolkit was developed to help children's programs across the state plan and conduct events to celebrate Arkansas Children's Week.

Use the materials in this booklet to guide your planning and to inform the media and community about your events and about the needs of children. Keep this toolkit and adapt it to use for any special event that your program plans in the future. You will find explanations and samples that you can either copy or customize to fit your needs. This booklet and all samples can be found on the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education Web site, http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare/acw. Click on Services A-Z and then Arkansas Children's Week.

Let us know about the special events you conduct during Arkansas Children's Week by completing the report form in the back of this booklet and returning it to the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education. Upon receipt of your report, we will send you a certificate of recognition.

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Planning and Conducting a Science Fun Day

Each county/community in our state is unique. The celebration of Arkansas Children's Week will differ from community to community. In some areas there will be major events hosted by a collaboration of schools, libraries, civic organizations, business and professional groups, Chamber of Commerce, churches, and others. In some parts of our state the celebration will be in an individual child care program , whether it is a family child care home, child care center, or school. No matter the size of the celebration…we are celebrating our children!

Don't forget to congratulate and to celebrate those who work with children in your area – give them a bonus, send flowers, order lunch, get together with families and have a surprise party, do something fun for your staff!

Reach out to colleagues and others in your community, and encourage them to become part of Arkansas Children's Week.

How to pull together collaborative groups within the region or community

- Identify several key people in the region or community with contacts/influence; people that others will support in the project; people who are in-the-know about what is going on in the community.
- Include representation from a variety of early education programs: private, Head Start, ABC, faith-based, school-age, family child care, public school, etc.
- Call an initial planning meeting with only a few key people (6 to 10 at the most)
    - Develop a framework for the event
    - Brainstorm ideas for partners – individuals, agencies, organizations, groups
    - Brainstorm locations for the event
    - Identify possible dates
    - Develop a timeline
    - Develop a projected budget for the event
    - Decide on person(s) to coordinate the event
- Schedule an expanded meeting, inviting representatives from the identified partners. Be specific as to the purpose of the meeting. Ask for commitments from those who plan to attend and send them a reminder e-mail.
- Have an agenda for the meeting, including the event framework, possible locations, dates, timeline, major tasks/ sub-committees
- Solicit additional ideas from those in attendance
- Identify sources of support, financial and other, for the event. Discuss additional grants that might be available.
- Get commitments from partners as to how they can/will support the event.
- Identify persons who are willing to be responsible for each major task/sub-committee
- Additional meetings will be necessary. However, schedule only if there are specific things to discuss/decide. You may decide to have the leadership team meet and communicate with partners via e-mail.

Selecting a site and date

- Find out what is going on in the community that might conflict with the event. (In Hot Springs, for example, you would avoid Arkansas Derby Day at Oaklawn Race Track because of traffic problems on major thoroughfares.)
- Explore planned events with which you might piggyback: kindergarten roundup, hospital health screenings, or a community festival, for example.
- Site – Look at all that is available in the community and the pluses and minuses of each. Consider the amount of space that would be available (how many people will it accommodate), location (do people know where it is and how to get there), sufficient parking, set-up and clean-up hours, what will the site provide (tables, chairs, table toppings and skirts, PA System, for example), restrictions as to what can be displayed and sold/not sold, food allowed/not allowed, handicap accessibility, liability/insurance.
  Possible sites: park, church hall/ gym, school gym, YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, shopping mall, community nature, recreation, or event center

- Benefits to local programs for participating in the collaborative Family Science Fun Day
    - ✓ Educate families
    - ✓ Families see and try developmentally appropriate activities with children
    - ✓ Opportunity to learn about science and nature topics together
    - ✓ Help families see the connection between what you're doing in your program and what they do at home
    - ✓ Comfortable setting in which to share information with parents
    - ✓ Make children's programs more visible in the community

- ✓ Families or staff register for your program when they attend. Have a drawing for program gifts, such as a set of science books or a basket of classroom science materials.
- ✓ Build relationships with parents
- ✓ Learn from networking with colleagues in your area

Insurance and safety precautions

- Find out from the site for the event who is the liable party. Is event insurance required and if so, who is the recommended carrier? Event insurance for a one-day event is usually not expensive.
- Is there security at the site? Is your organization responsible for providing security and if so, what is required?
- Individuals from your group should be alert during the event and report concerns.
- On all information provided to families, clearly state: KEEP YOUR CHILD WITH YOU AT ALL TIMES. Stress to workers that they are not to allow families to leave their children with them while they shop, etc., and that they are to encourage family participation in the activities.

Family Fun Day event ideas

The following ideas could be a great way to celebrate Arkansas Children's Week, but could also be used throughout the year to encourage children and families to focus on nature and science learning. Consider providing some, or all, of the following stations at a family fun event:

- "Make and Take" station where children can make their own bag of play dough, putty, or slime. Provide copies of recipes for families.

- Bubble play area with a variety of wands and other tools for blowing bubbles.

- Sand or water play table with natural materials, such as river rocks or seashells, or materials that encourage experimentation, such as pumps, wheels, and rubber tubing.

- Wildlife exhibit from a local rehabilitation center, state park ranger, or nature center. University entomology departments may also be willing to furnish and staff a "bug zoo", and a giant, mobile aquarium can be reserved from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.

- Seed planting station.

- Area where children and families can make simple bird feeders to take home.

- Exploration station with interesting natural objects (pine cones, tree bark, quartz crystals, seed pods, etc.) and magnifying glasses.

- Structure building station; families can construct towers and bridges by stacking small plastic cups or by connecting toothpicks using marshmallows, gumdrops, or balls of play dough.

- Light and/or shadow station. Provide a light table or overhead projector for experimentation with transparent, colored materials, or hang a backlit white sheet to allow children to cast shadows.

- Space to make and fly paper airplanes. Who will have the longest flight?

- Ramp building area with Hot Wheels cars.

- Storyteller's corner with science- and nature-related books and puppets.

- Kite making and/or flying areas. A family kite festival could also be an event idea all by itself!

Community Support & Services Stations

- Health Department
- Police/Sheriff/Fire Department/Ambulance
- Educational outreach from local hospital
- Screenings – Developmental, Vision, Hearing

- Library
- Area state park
- Game and Fish Commission
- Recycling Center

Door Prizes during the event

- Gift certificates/passes for nearby family cabins/nature resort or hands-on science museum.
- Gift certificates from local merchants
- Science toys, such as tub toys, bubble solution, bug boxes, and realistic plastic animal sets.
- Outdoor recreation equipment for families, such as kites, flying discs, and/or camping equipment.

Make sure door prizes are appropriate for children and families. For example, one group was offered Brittany Spears CDs, which they graciously declined, explaining why.

Make sure door prizes do not become the focal part of the event. Focus on children and families playing and learning together.

Establish in advance how door prizes are to be awarded. Post door prize rules.

Goodie Bags distributed at the event

- Information about local happenings for families and children
- Brochures from science museums/centers
- Outdoor recreation information, including maps and brochures from local state parks and nature centers
- Health and safety information for families

Sample Posters and Flyers

Adapt the sample flyer for committee members to take with them when they approach individuals and businesses/ agencies/organizations for donations and/or participation.

Add the date, time, and location of your event to the sample flyer. Distribute flyers to all children's programs in your area. Labels for licensed and registered child care programs are available from the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education. Send a cover letter with the flyer asking the program to copy and distribute the flyer to families.

Download the ACW poster from www.arkansas.gov/childcare/acw. Distribute posters and flyers to public places in the community such as the DHS office, the Health Unit, public library, and pediatricians' offices.

Order church bulletin inserts from the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education. Committee members and program directors can distribute these to churches.

Sample partnership agreement, mayor proclamation, news release

The partnership agreement should include the name, date and site of the event, the sponsoring group and the name of the partner and what that partner will contribute to the event (money, product donation, sponsor a station, etc.). Also include any timelines designated, the responsibility of the sponsoring group to the partner (listing in publicity and during event, for example). Provide a place for signatures and titles of both the sponsoring group and the partner and the date. Also, include the address, phone number and e-mail addresses for both parties. Give a copy to each party.

Adapt the sample press release and mayor's proclamation to include information about your local event.

Tips for conducting a Family Fun Event

Do not allow promotion of individual children's programs. The primary purpose is family education/participation and fun. On the posters for each play station, you may choose to list the name of the program that is staffing the station.

Provide door prizes to children's programs that help with the event: setting up and staffing an activity station or working in some other way such as registration, set-up and clean-up. Their families can register in the name of the program.

Suggested Timeline

It is suggested that you begin making contacts and planning your events for Arkansas Children's Week well in advance. Brainstorm everything that you would like to happen during the week and set a schedule of events. Include a back-up plan for events – have a substitute in mind in case a special guest cannot make the date or has to cancel and don't forget back-up locations for events in case of inclement weather. To insure a successful event, give adequate notice to special guests, business, media and families of your plans. Check the suggested sample timeline and adjust it to your own events. (This is a guide for developing your own timeline. If you're getting a late start, you may want to consolidate some of the beginning steps.)

February

- ☑ Enlist a planning team (representing your early childhood community or your center, depending on the scope of your planning)
- ☑ Set a time for the first meeting of the planning team
- ☑ Meet with the planning team to brainstorm ideas for Arkansas Children's Week
- ☑ Determine responsibilities of team members
- ☑ Determine budget or funding source
- ☑ Keep a record of assignments that team members volunteer to take
- ☑ Order t-shirts and ACW materials
- ☑ Confirm location for event
- ☑ Contact individuals or groups whom you are inviting to speak or do special presentations

March

- ☑ Check community calendar to avoid schedule conflicts
- ☑ Keep teachers informed
- ☑ Do initial communication with parents
- ☑ Contact local officials regarding proclamations
- ☑ Contact local businesses and organizations regarding their involvement
- ☑ Meet with planning team for updates on team member responsibilities and additional tasks
- ☑ Contact the media regarding publicity
- ☑ Send letter to the editor regarding awareness issues
- ☑ Use church bulletin inserts during the month, if related to your Children's Week plans
- ☑ Involve children in art projects or other highlights, if appropriate
- ☑ Send reminders to teachers and parents
- ☑ Meet with planning team to refine final details for events or projects
- ☑ Continue publicity, especially with signs and banners

April

April 10-16, 2011: Arkansas Children's Week

- ☑ Enjoy your Family Fun Event and other special events. Remember we are celebrating **children!**
- ☑ Honor teachers and parents, as well

Week after Children's Week

- ☑ Have a get-together of the planning team to evaluate and follow-up
- ☑ Send certificates to individuals and businesses who participated
- ☑ Pay bills
- ☑ Keep a file on this year's activities for future reference
- ☑ Submit a report of your event to the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education. A report form is included in this booklet.

Contact Local Media

If you have a special event in your community, we suggest you contact the local media to advertise your event. Send press releases to all local newspapers, and invitations to radio stations and local television stations. Check with local radio

and television programs that will announce community events. Contact them several weeks in advance. If they ask for a guest to appear on air, send someone knowledgeable about early childhood as well as the Arkansas Children's Week event to speak on the program. Include special guest names, especially elected officials and sponsoring organizations or businesses. Use the letter to the editor to announce community events and draw attention to Arkansas Children's Week.

Media Invitation

(To local news or cable television to cover Arkansas Children's Week event)

Arkansas Children's Week

[Name of your Affiliate / Organization] is celebrating Arkansas Children's Week, April 10-16, 2011! This is an opportunity to show what organizations in [your city] are doing to help young children here in our community.

[Describe the event, highlighting any visual opportunities the news station can videotape. This could include the reading of a proclamation by a local official or it could be your Family Science Fun Day Event].

[Name and Title of your Affiliate / Organization's Leader] will be on hand to discuss Arkansas Children's Week and the local impact of important early childhood education issues, including public child care subsidies and school readiness [or other issues impacting your city].

For more information about covering Arkansas Children's Week events, please contact [Name and Title of your Affiliate/ Organization's Leader] at [email address] or [phone number].

News Release

The news release template provides you with a simple way to attract local media interest in Arkansas Children's Week, your events, and the need for more high quality early childhood education programs. You can customize the news release by inserting the name of your center or organization, along with information about the special activities you have planned for Arkansas Children's Week. Send the news release to newspapers, magazines, and radio and television stations in your area. You can get the names of the best contacts within each news organization by contacting the news desk. Send out the news release early enough for reporters to plan to cover the events.

-- SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE --

For more information, contact
[Media Contact and Affiliate/Organization Name]
[Phone Number and E-mail Address]

[YOUR AFFILIATE/ORGANIZATION] JOINS STATE CELEBRATION
ARKANSAS CHILDREN'S WEEK
Let's Explore Science!

[DATE], 2011 – [Name of your Affiliate/Organization] celebrates Arkansas Children's Week (April 10 - 16, 2011) to recognize the needs of young children and thank educators and others involved in the education and care of young children. Arkansas Children's Week coincides with the national Week of the Young Child and is celebrated across the state and country by thousands of local organizations working to improve opportunities for all young children.

"Early learning experiences are crucial to the growth and development of young children," said [Name and Title of your Affiliate/Organization's Leader]. "Arkansas Children's Week provides opportunities for all of us to recognize the importance of early learning experiences, including opportunities for hand's-on, age appropriate science learning.

During Arkansas Children's Week, early childhood programs across the state, including child care and Head Start programs, preschools, and elementary schools, hold special events to bring awareness to the needs of young children. "Young children and their families across the state depend on quality education and care," said Rich Huddleston, Executive Director of Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families. "Arkansas Children's Week is a time to recognize the people, programs and policies that are helping to build better futures for children."

[Name of your Affiliate / Organization] recommends ways to show that high-quality early education is the right choice for kids:

- Volunteer your time to work with children and teachers at a school, community center, Head Start or child care program; spend time playing with a child;
- Support policies and programs that help improve professional opportunities and compensation for teachers and staff;
- Thank early childhood educators and others who play a vital role in preparing young children to succeed in school and beyond.

# # #

T-SHIRT DAY
APRIL 12, 2011

Join with others across the state and wear you ACW shirt with pride!

Need to order t-shirts?
1-800-445-3316 or 501-682-9699
http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare/acw

Letter to the Editor

The letter to the editor is designed to bring awareness of the issues affecting children in your community. This brings important information about early childhood education issues to a broader audience. Someone from your center or organization or a family member can be asked to submit the letter to the editor in their name. Use the following letter to the editor as a sample, customizing the letter with information about the needs of young children in your community.

April 2011

Dear Editor,

The early years are a crucial time for children's growth and development, and a time when we help children prepare to succeed in school and in life.

April 10-16 is Arkansas Children's Week, a time to recognize the needs of young children, and thank the adults involved in their education and care. Parents, teachers, caregivers and other adults play important roles in the lives of young children, and Arkansas Children's Week celebrates their efforts.

Early education programs – including child care, Head Start, preschools, Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) programs and elementary schools – provide crucial learning experiences for many young children.

Every adult in our community has opportunities to make a difference, from volunteering at a local program to supporting efforts that help more young children benefit from quality early education. Children learn while they are playing—spend some time playing with a child. Arkansas Children's Week is a good time for all of us to acknowledge the needs of children, and work together to build better futures for all children.

Sincerely,
[Your Name, Address, and Phone Number]

Sample Letters of Support

Send a letter to local businesses, community organizations and elected officials explaining why we celebrate Arkansas Children's Week and what special events are planned. Community organizations such as the Junior League or Junior Auxiliary, high school and college organizations, the local Chamber of Commerce, Lions, Kiwanis or other civic groups may be interested in participating in events or sponsoring an event. Use the sample letter and customize it to include the Arkansas Children's Week events planned and the role you would like them to play in these events. Local businesses and community organizations look for ways to improve the community and usually have volunteers and sometimes a small budget to help out with community events.

[Date]
[Business or Local Organization]
[Address]

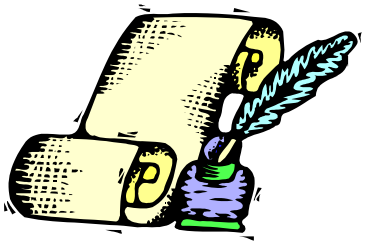
Dear [Name of President or Manager],
Name of your Affiliate/Organization] celebrates Arkansas Children's Week (April 10 - 16, 2011) to recognize the needs of young children and thank educators and others involved in the education and care of young children. Arkansas Children's Week is celebrated across the state by local organizations working to improve opportunities for all young children.

During Arkansas Children's Week, early childhood programs, including child care and Head Start programs, preschools and elementary schools, hold special events to bring awareness to the needs of young children. This year, many communities are conducting Family Science Day events to emphasize the value of age-appropriate science and nature activities for children.

Please consider using this opportunity for [Name of Business or organization] to show support for children in our community. We would appreciate [ask for donation or participation in event – detail event with date, time, cost if asking for donation, and specific request for business or organization].

If you need further information, please contact [name, address, phone number, and e-mail address of person facilitating event]. We look forward to working with you and appreciate your support.

Sincerely,
[Name, organization/affiliate]



ARKANSAS CHILDREN'S WEEK

SAMPLE PROCLAMATION

PROCLAMATION BY MAYOR/COUNTY JUDGE

Whereas, the early childhood professionals, teachers, caregivers, families, and other local organizations, in conjunction with the DHS Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education are celebrating Arkansas Children's Week on April 10 - 16, 2011; and

Whereas, these organizations are working to improve early learning opportunities, which are crucial to the growth and development of young children, and to building better futures for everyone in [city/state]; and

Whereas, children learn about the world, about other people, and about themselves through meaningful play activities; and

Whereas, all young children and their families across the country and in [city/state] deserve access to high-quality early education and care; and

Whereas, in recognizing and supporting the people, programs and policies that are committed to high-quality early childhood education;

I, [name of official], [Mayor/Governor] of the [city/state], do hereby proclaim April 10 - 16, 2011 as Arkansas Children's Week in [city/state] and encourage all citizens to work to make a good investment in early childhood in [city/state].

Reproducible signs for 2011 Arkansas Children's Week

Customize this flyer and distribute it to local businesses to encourage them to support Arkansas Children's Week. Let local businesses know what they can do to get involved in Arkansas Children's Week events. Many businesses have budgets set aside for good will promotions. You can also download print this sign from http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare/acw.

Reproducible certificate for participating businesses/individuals

Copy this certificate and present it to participating businesses, organizations, special guests and individuals as a way of recognizing their support. Copying it onto colored or special paper adds a nice touch. You can download and print this certificate from http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare/acw.

Event Report Form

We want to know what special events occurred in your community during Arkansas Children's Week. Complete this form and list all of the special events your program participated in for Arkansas Children's Week. Send it in to the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education for a Certificate of Recognition.

arkansas childrens week 2011

Let's explore science!

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

AWARDED TO

Thank you for contributing to the

2011 Arkansas Children's Week.

Awarded this ___ day of _____, 20__

_____

Presenter Name and Title

Arkansas Children's Week

April 10 – 16, 2011

LAST DAY TO ORDER IS MARCH 21ST!

Mail Order Form To
M&M PROMOTIONS
P.O. BOX 56698
LITTLE ROCK, AR 72215-6698
(501) 224-9881
www.mandmpromotions.com

T-Shirts for 2011 will be Purple with 3 color logo on front.

T-SHIRT	QUANTITY	PRICE	AMOUNT
TODDLER SHIRT (6-12 mo) – White		$5.00	
YOUTH X-SMALL (2-4)		$3.75	
YOUTH SMALL (6-8)		$3.75	
YOUTH MEDIUM (10-12)		$3.75	
YOUTH LARGE (14-16)		$3.75	
ADULT SMALL		$4.25	
ADULT MEDIUM		$4.25	
ADULT LARGE		$4.25	
ADULT X-LARGE		$4.25	
ADULT 2X-LARGE		$5.25	
ADULT 3X-LARGE		$5.25	
BIB APRONS (ONE SIZE) – White		$7.50	
TOTE BAG (ONE SIZE) - Natural		$4.50	
CINCH BACK PACK – Purple with Gold Imprint		$3.00	
3' x 8' Banner (with ACW & Your Facility Name)		$120.00	
CUSTOMIZATION: Minimum Order is 24 Shirts! Wording for Customization: _____ (This is what will be printed on the back of the t-shirt)	Total # of Shirts: (Not Including Toddler Size)	$1.50 (Per Shirt)	
		SUBTOTAL	(1)$
SHIPPING/HANDLING: You must Include Shipping OR your order will be delayed!!! Add $10.00 - Orders $0 - $36; Add $16.00 - Orders $37 - $144; Add $23.00 - Orders $145 - $450; Add $45.00 - Orders $450 - $1,000		TOTAL SHIPPING/HANDLING	(2)$
i.e. Block (1) + Block (2)		SUBTOTAL + SHIPPING/HANDLING	(3)$
YOU MUST INCLUDE AR SALES TAX i.e. Block (3) * 0.075		SALES TAX (7.5%)	(4)$
i.e. Block (3) + Block (4)		TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED	(5)$

SHIP TO ADDRESS: (Will NOT Ship to a PO Box, please list a street address)

NAME_____ CONTACT_____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

PAYMENT INFORMATION: (Make Check Payable to: M&M Promotions)
Please send only 1 check and 1 order form per facility or your order will be delayed!

CHECK # _____ CHECK AMOUNT $_____

CREDIT CARD PAYMENT (Visa/ MasterCard/ American Express/ Discover)

CREDIT CARD #: _____

Exp. Date _____ Zip Code:_____ CVVC #: _____ (3 or 4 Digit # on Back of Card)

2011 Arkansas Children's Week

Event Report Form

Organization or Children's Program:

_____

_____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Contact Name: _____

Phone _____ E-mail address: _____

Tell us about the Family Play Day or other event that you participated in during 2011 Arkansas Children's Week.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Return to:

DHS Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
P.O. Box 1437, Slot S140
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-1437

Department of Human Services
Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
P.O. Box 1437, Slot S140
Little Rock, AR 72203-4608

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
LITTLE ROCK
PERMIT NO. 1045