

# EARLY LEARNING TODAY

Summer 2005

*Serving Early Care & Education Professionals, Communities & Families of Southeast Missouri*

*Child Care Resource & Referral • Workshop On Wheels*

## **Picture This: Inclusion in Children's Books**

Your children's bookshelf should include books that represent developmental diversity whether or not your program currently includes a child with disabilities or developmental delays. In addition, the interests, developmental stage, and day to day reality of each child currently enrolled should be reflected in your book selection. As children who live with a disability enroll in your program, you honor them as well by providing books with stories and pictures about people living their lives in similar situations.

You help children feel accepted as well as learn to readily accept one another by providing books about individuals with disabilities in various kinds of families, circumstances, and professions. You show sensitivity and appreciation for young children with disabilities (and their families) when you make this effort. Imagine the delight and feelings of acceptance of a parent or other family member who notices these books in your book area.

Children benefit from peeking into the lives of real people who are both like and unlike themselves, and, once in a while, you can help them be the boy or girl in their own made-up stories as well. Children learn best from being exposed to the excellent examples the world has to offer from people who have varying levels of ability.

The following children's books are appropriate for use in the early childhood classroom.

**A Place for Grace** by J.D. Okimoto and D. Keith (1993). Seattle, WA: Sasquatch Books. Grace is a little dog with big dreams. After discovering she's too small to become a seeing-eye dog, she meets Charlie, a man who believes Grace would make the ideal hearing-aid dog. Grace provides an inspiring model for any child facing obstacles at school or at home. It gives readers an opportunity to learn the American Sign Language alphabet.

**Friends in the Park** by R. Bunnett and C. Sahlhoff (1993). New York: Checkerboard Press. In this picture-book, a group of friends, some with disabilities, get together for a wonderful day of playing in the park.

**Mama Zooms** by J. Cowen-Fletcher (1993). New York: Scholastic Press, INC. A young boy sits in his mother's lap and "zooms" with her into space, across the desert, and through the Wild West... all in her wheelchair.

**We'll Paint the Octopus Red** by S. Stuve-Bodeen and P. Devito (1998). Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House. Emma and her father discuss what they will do when the new baby arrives. When the baby is born with Down syndrome, they talk about what new things they might need to do (or not) with the baby. A sequel to this book is coming out this month (June 2005) called **The Best Worst Brother**. Emma is learning to get along with her now three-year-old brother, Isacc.

*Source: Child Care plus+: The Center on Inclusion in Early Childhood*

## **Attention**

### **All Child Care Providers**

Is your center interested in pursuing **Accreditation?**

We currently have limited openings in our facilitation project to assist your program through the accreditation process!!

If interested please call Christy at 1 (800) 811-1127 ext. # 8 or email [ccolyer@semo.edu](mailto:ccolyer@semo.edu) for more information.