

# EARLY LEARNING TODAY

Jan-Feb-Mar 2008

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

Child Care Resource & Referral • Workshop On Wheels

## STRENGTHENING FAMILIES PILOT SITE RECIPIENT 2007-2008

The Early Learning Center, Inc. of Oran, Missouri is excited to share with you a new initiative that insures safe and quality care of children that is currently being piloted in the state. We are one of eight early child care facilities in the state that has been chosen to serve as a pilot site for the National Strengthening Families Initiative. Strengthening Families is a new approach for Missouri that will use early child care programs to build preventative factors for children and their families to reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect. The five protective factors are: parent resilience, social connections, knowledge of parenting and child development, concrete support in times of need, and social and emotional competence of children. We are currently working on the Strengthening Families self study to embed these protective factors into our program. The staff and parents have access to training and technical assistance to implement this new approach. We hope to share more detailed information on specific things that we are doing to implement these factors in our program, in upcoming newsletter articles.

- Stephanie Hahn  
Early Learning Center Inc., Oran, MO

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## CONGRATULATIONS TO SEVEN WHO COMPLETE BUSINESS PROGRAM

The Developing Your Family Child Care Business program is a curriculum that helps providers merge their desire to provide care for children with their need to do it as a viable business. The 36 hour program, provided by Child Care Resource & Referral also gives child care providers the knowledge needed to build a sustainable business that serves their needs and the needs of the community. Those who recently completed the fall course are: Front row: Dana Barker of Naylor, Camela Pullen of Cape Girardeau, and Raven Kirkley of Poplar Bluff. Back row: Chitra K.S. Jayaweera of Cape Girardeau, Suzanne Lambert of Sikeston, and Gloria Black and Delois Jackson, both of Cape Girardeau.

## HELP FAMILIES PUT MONEY BACK IN THEIR POCKETS!

Every year, thousands of families fail to claim tax credits that can help them pay for child care and other expenses. As child care providers and advocates for children and families, you have an opportunity to educate families about these valuable tax benefits. Tell working parents they (as well as you) could get up to thousands of dollars in tax credits. Whether or not they owe income tax, if they work and have children, they could qualify for:

- Up to \$2,100 from the federal Child Care and Dependent Care Tax Credit
- Up to \$4,716 from the federal Earned Income Tax Credit; and
- Up to \$1,000 per child from the federal Child Tax Credit

To get these credits, they must file a tax return. They can find out where to get FREE help with taxes by calling the IRS toll-free at (800) 829-1040. Or go to [www.irs.gov/individuals/topic](http://www.irs.gov/individuals/topic).