Foothills Preschool provides quality, child focused and affordable education for children ages 2-5. The Montessori-based curriculum is specially designed to provide children with an enriching classroom environment that facilitates exploration, fun and practical opportunities to master developmental skills. Our classroom offers a caring place for children to experience independence and grow in confidence through learning about respect for self, others and the world around them.

Foothills Adventist Preschool officially opened for children on January 18, 2006. I had been in touch with the state licensing annalist awaiting clearance from the Fire Marshall, and got the okay to go ahead and open late the day before on Tuesday at about 5 pm. I called all the wonderful parents who had been waiting so patiently for so long, and then set about to get ready to receive children the next day. The classroom had been ready for quite some time but since I had been away from teaching for several months, I prayed! Children in the environment make all the difference as I certainly experienced the opposite during the long start-up process before actually opening the doors to little ones. What a “ride” and so many “hoops” to jump through, but so worth it to finally be in operation.

We had nine families that had been waiting since October when we had so naively expected that the preschool would open. There were many things that needed to be accomplished and within a tight start-up budget so we were really depending on the Lord. He sent many dedicated and generous volunteers and donations our way for which we are very grateful. I wish I could go into the numerous answers to prayer that we experienced throughout this ordeal. From the beginning it has been clear that this preschool is something that God has wanted to see come about and that He is blessing today. I am so grateful to be a part of this special school and unique ministry in the community.

At the start of February we enrolled another child and still another mid-month. We have an on-going marketing program at St. Helena Hospital, but no Hospital employee children as yet. Hospital employees need an early day and flexible schedule for child care. Our hope is that we will be able to meet those needs as our enrollment increases and we can afford to hire an additional qualified teacher.

We are able to keep tuition affordable partly because our parents provide snack items and have generously donated other materials as well. Unlike Discoveryland, we don’t have financial subsidy assistance for College Students from PUC, but hope to be able to offer those kinds of discounts in the future.

Our local Churches have been extremely helpful and supportive in this venture. Not only in providing partial scholarships for needy families but also in providing “hands on” help in our construction projects. Many church members, elders and pastors have volunteered hours of personal hard labor and materials in order to see this Preschool become a reality. God is good!

What am I enjoying most about my position now that we have finished the organizing and coordinating of construction projects? Now that we have opened and the children have settled in I am enjoying most being able to share God’s love and His word with these precious little ones. This is a first experience for me, coming from many years teaching in the secular E.C.E system.

I have a Montessori background and have been enjoying very much designing the classroom environment to suit the unique and individual developmental needs of the 2-5 year old; and now even more so, getting to know all of the children personally.

And of course, to be here on this campus at Foothills Adventist Elementary School, with its fine and deserving reputation for providing excellent education and the caring Christian standards that are reflected in the students as well as the teachers and staff.

I thank God for this wonderful opportunity and for His faith in me.

Micki Gangbin, Director/Teacher
Were you aware that the Pacific Union Conference Early Childhood Education and Care Directory is on the PUCOE website? It is indeed! In fact, we have made a lot of additions to our website in an effort to be of greater service to our constituents. Look us up at: (http://www.puconline.org/article.php?id=148).

**ECEC POLICY, PROCEDURE AND GUIDELINES MANUAL**

Finally, the Early Childhood Education and Care Policy, Procedure and Guidelines Manual (PPGM) is in publication and on the Pacific Union Conference Office of Education website. It has taken a lot of work on the part of a lot of individuals to draft and edit this document. The PPGM provides for the establishment and maintenance of early childhood education and care (ECEC) facilities throughout the Union. The purpose of this manual, voted into effect on October 13, 2005, is to establish a relationship among Seventh-day Adventist conference entities within the Pacific Union who are presently and/or contemplating the operation of an ECEC program. The PPGM is an evolving document that has and will continue to address the collective needs and concerns of Adventist ECEC facilities within the Pacific Union Conference. To this end, the ad-hoc committee responsible for the PPGM will continue to meet in an effort to address on-going and additional concerns. Should you wish to be involved or request the ad-hoc’s investigation into a matter, please contact the Early Childhood Education and Care Division of the Pacific Union Conference Office of Education at (805) 413-7342.

**PACIFIC UNION CONFERENCE ECEC LICENSING APPLICATION FORMS**

As of October 13, 2005, all proposed early childhood programs within the Pacific Union Conference must file an application for licensure with the Pacific Union Conference Office of Education, Early Childhood Education and Care Division. The ECEC Division has established all the necessary forms and information, provided sample copies to each local conference office of education and posted them on the PUC website: (http://www.puconline.org/article.php?id=148).

In addition, we have organized information to help directors maintain required records. A separate link is supplied for each section of this helpful information and includes all necessary forms and instructions for the sections Administrative Records, Personnel Records, Child’s Records, and Required Documents for Posting. These links are under the licensing application forms link on the PUC website: (http://www.puconline.org/article.php?id=148).

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**Does your center have a website?** If so, send us an email with a link to your website! We will then put your website link on the PUCOE website below your center’s name and contact information. This is just one more way we are trying to help draw attention to your programs.

**A Journey to Excellence**

COME TO THE 2006 ADVENTIST TEACHER’S CONVENTION
AUGUST 6—9, 2006, NASHVILLE, TN
www.nadeducation.org
or
www.nadteachersconvention.org

**Are You Snack Smart?**

1. Which one of these milk-based snacks has the least calcium per serving?
   - A) 4-oz. container of low-fat cottage cheese
   - B) 4-oz. container of low-fat yogurt
   - C) 4-oz. container of vanilla pudding
   Answer: A. The cottage cheese has 80 mg of calcium. The pudding has 80 mg, and the yogurt has 200 mg.

2. True or False: A 1/4-cup serving of orange juice from concentrate has as much vitamin C as a medium orange.
   Answer: False. The juice has 16 mg more.

3. Which has more fat: an ounce of butter-flavored popcorn or an ounce of party snack mix?
   Answer: The popcorn has 50 percent more fat than the snack mix.

4. Which serving of fruit has the most fiber?
   - A) 1/4 cup strawberries
   - B) 1 medium banana
   - C) 1/4 cup blueberries
   - D) 1/4 cup raisins
   Answer: None. They’re all the same, at about 2 grams of fiber each.

*Parents* March 2005, p. 188
For Your Information

Adventist early childhood education and care centers have a need for Adventist early childhood teachers and directors of high and increasing quality, experience and knowledge. We have found that there are plenty of individuals willing and able to work in Adventist centers, however, many of them are lacking prior ECE knowledge and experience. What we need is a medium for immediate, on-the-job training for these willing individuals.

Within the Adventist system, we have several strengths. For instance:

Pacific Union College, Atlantic Union College, Columbia Union College, and Southwestern Union College all offer early childhood degree programs. Oakwood College offers a Human Development and Family Studies degree. In addition, La Sierra University offers a Masters degree in Education with an early childhood emphasis.

The Pacific Union Conference Office of Education (PUCOE) Division of Early Childhood Education and Care has an approved curriculum and is piloting a new curriculum for possible future use.

Southern Union Conference Office of Education (SUCOE) is currently piloting an early childhood program accreditation document.

The North American Division Office of Education (NADOE) has formed an Early Childhood Task Force that will be looking into the challenges facing Adventist ECE programs and working toward solutions.

If you've ever felt the stress and frustration of trying to find a qualified, Adventist early childhood teacher or faced the challenges of providing affordable, continuing education each year, I think we have found a workable solution for you. National Child Care Systems (NCCS) is a distance learning option specifically targeted for individuals at the entrance level of early childhood education. It consists of a CD-ROM containing 16 courses. The disc is developed to be on auto-run and anyone can complete the coursework at their leisure.

Each course has a pre-test and post-test and students must have a passing score of 70% to receive a certificate. Once they view the training, teachers complete a paper test taken manually in a true and false format. Sixteen Master Testing sheets - one for each course - are included with the CD-ROM packet so you can copy as many tests as you need.

Each completed test is mailed to the NCCS office, along with a low per test payment of $8. NCCS grades the test and issues the certificates. Whenever a student does not attain that score, they are notified and given the opportunity to review the coursework again and take another test covering the same coursework.

The NCCS Training Program is currently accepted in the following states:

- Alabama
- Idaho
- Nebraska
- South Carolina
- Arizona
- Indiana
- New Hampshire
- South Dakota
- Colorado
- Maine
- New York
- Tennessee
- Connecticut
- Michigan
- Oklahoma
- Texas
- Florida
- Minnesota
- Oregon
- Utah
- Georgia
- Rhode Island
- Wisconsin

As of Wednesday, February 8, 2006 California Community Care Licensing Division has given verbal approval for use of NCCS distance learning course material within California ECE programs – when course completion certificates are offered by an accredited college. Currently, the University of Georgia provides for college credit approval of the NCCS course materials.

So, to help our Adventist centers in their quest to hire and train Adventist employees, PUCOE Division of Early Childhood Education and Care is promoting the NCCS coursework for immediate use within the field.

http://www.nccs.citymax.com/page/page/1325265.htm

Remember, these are entry level courses. The PUC ECEC Division is working with NCCS to provide more advanced courses in ECE, but it will take several months before they are ready as distance learning options. To be sure—updates will be coming!

By: Christine Gillan-Byrne
The Seventh-day Adventist church does not have an official position on CA Proposition 82. However, we do have some concerns.

The historical view of the Adventist church is that the ideal situation for a young child is to be at home with a parent until the age of formal school entry. Since that is not realistic in today’s economic environment, many Adventists have felt that preschools are a valuable resource for the community and the state. Currently, the Adventist church operates some 31 centers within the state of California with several more pending. To be sure, we are not against preschool; we simply have some serious concerns regarding the Preschool for All initiative. Below are four reasons:

1. **CA Prop. 82 requires a non-sectarian program.**
   In order to participate in the Preschool for All program religious providers will either have to compromise their religious mission and program, or risk substantial loss of clientele, resulting in closure for many. In an early childhood program, the operational margin is so tight that unless a center has the enrollment to meet their financial requirements, they will be forced to close. Adventist-operated early childhood programs have already experienced this reality in two communities. The result: The preschool program loses its opportunity to provide for the community and families who want a church-based preschool program for their young child lose also.

2. **CA Prop. 82 mandates curricula aligned with statewide standards for elementary education.**
   Such are likely to result in inflexible curricula and testing of preschool children. The testing of young children is inappropriate and consistently renders inaccurate results. However, in order for the state to validate the quality of participating programs, there has to be some type of accountability. One possible solution would be for the state to look at accreditation protocols rather than testing young children in order to validate the quality of participating programs.

3. **The stated intent of CA Prop. 82 advocates is to eventually provide preschool for all ages,** which some fear will become compulsory. For instance, compulsory Kindergarten did not pass the CA legislature in 2005. What most people do not know is that compulsory Kindergarten has been a legislative battleground for the past 10 years. Parents should have the right to decide what type of training their young child receives and where they receive it. They should not be forced to enroll them in a school or even to register their home as a "school" in order to keep their young child at home. Compulsory education at younger and younger ages is a concern.

4. **CA Prop. 82 funds will provide preschool for 3 hours a day, but for only 180 days per year and there is no means test for eligibility,** so taxpayers will be required to fund preschool for middle and upper class families, as well as those in need. There are already several state and federal programs providing funding to eligible families for child care and preschool, including both part time and full time programs as needed by the family. It would be a better use of CA tax dollars to use funds from something like Prop. 82 to extend and broaden the existing funding programs in order to help a larger percentage of underprivileged children.

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**Employment Opportunities**

If you are looking for **summer help**, Pacific Union College Early Childhood majors could be the answer to your short-term employment needs!

For more information contact Dr. Margo Haskins at the Education Department of Pacific Union College (707) 965-6340.

**2006 Dates to Remember . . .**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>April 3-7</td>
<td>Week of the Young Child (NAEYC)</td>
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<td>April 10</td>
<td>ECE Teacher's in-service, Antioch, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 14</td>
<td>ECE Teacher's in-service, Fresno, CA</td>
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<td>April 24—28</td>
<td>National Playground Safety Week</td>
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<td>May 2</td>
<td>ECE Teacher Appreciation Day</td>
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<td>July 10</td>
<td>PUC ECEC Advisory, Westlake Village, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 6—9</td>
<td>NAD Teachers Convention, Nashville, TN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 12</td>
<td>PUC ECEC Board, Westlake Village, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 8—11</td>
<td>NAEYC Conference, Atlanta, GA</td>
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Christine Gillan-Byrne, Coordinator  
Early Childhood Education and Care Division  
P. O. Box 5005  
Westlake Village, CA 91359

ECEC Newsletter edited by J. Masterson