In June of 2003, Iruka Yochien opened its doors with the full intention of providing the community with a Japanese language school in addition to a Japanese preschool for children 2-5 years of age. The average monthly attendance for that year was around 10 children. “Children are greatly influenced in a variety of ways during their preschool years,” writes Principal/Director Elder Teruo (Ted) Tomita. His philosophy is very simple: “to teach children to enjoy learning, playing cheerfully with humility and consideration for others.”

He then outlines his vision in four concise statements.

- The first key for parents and preschools is to provide a lot of enjoyable experiences for children.
- The second essential key is to ensure a balanced development which includes intellectual, spiritual and physical growth.
- The third key is to create children with the ability to think and accomplish tasks spontaneously and by themselves.
- Finally, it is important to encourage the children to discover and learn through experiences and to develop a variety of interests.

Beginning with only one classroom and teacher, Iruka Yochien has steadily grown. In 2006, the average monthly attendance had increased to approximately 26 children and 2007 has seen even more enrollment increases for Iruka Yochien.

The secret to their continued growth seems to come from two main components as expressed by their clientele: Genuine care for the children and regular communication with families.

“The teachers write Daily Reports... and have open hearts, which is essential in accepting such a diverse population of children. The principal is a real honest person who is remiscent of heroes of the novels written by Shusaku Endo (a Catholic Japanese novelist who lived from 1923-1996) who compare to Jesus Christ.”

“There is no preschool that provides tender loving care such as... Iruka Yochien. ...In order to teach my child English, I [sent] him/her to a local American preschool; but, the teachers there [were] incredibly impersonal and dispassionate. I have never had better impressions of a preschool than I do for Iruka Yochien.”

Who are these incredible teachers? Just printing their names would not do them justice. Sayo Sudoh is the teacher for the two and three year old classroom, otherwise known as the Penguin Class. She has three main goals for her young charges:

- to develop self help skills, expressive and receptive language abilities, and to learn how to sympathize with one another.
- Yuko Yoneoka, who teaches in the three year old classroom, adds that the most interesting aspect of the preschool is the global classes, meaning multicultural classrooms. “Most of the parents do not speak Japanese,” but the children learn it everyday and are able to translate between English, Japanese, Spanish, Chinese, and other languages.
- Assistant director Chisato Chiu teaches the pre-kindergarten class with an enviable energetic poise. She reiterates that all the classes are instructed in Japanese and the Japanese culture, including celebrations, is an integral part of the daily program. She too is impressed with the international appeal of Iruka Yochien recounting such nationalities as Belgian, Mexican, Korean, Chinese, German, and Colombion. “It’s amazing to see how fast children who have no Japanese background learn Japanese.”

“I am very pleased to have my son attending Iruka Yochien. The teachers here are so loving and caring. During snack and meal times, children and teachers informally converse with each other; at naptime, [the] teachers help children relax and comfort children. Daily reports, posted calendars and monthly newspapers all make me aware [of] what my son is going to do each day and how he is doing at school... Living in [the] U.S., I am happy that he is able to learn Japanese culture, languages and songs at Iruka Yochien. Because of the loving and dedicated teachers here, I will also send my daughter to Iruka Yochien.”

Mother of a young client

No doubt, this early childhood program and language school is meeting the needs of many families with young children within the Los Angeles County. May God continue to bless Iruka Yochien, the teachers, families and Elder Tomita.
Directors’ Workshop

October 14 and 15, 2007

In the history of the Adventist church, there has never been anything like it! This is the first time a union-wide meeting has been planned and paid for, specifically targeting early childhood program directors.

Since January, the Pacific Union Conference Office of Education has been advertising a Directors’ Workshop for October, 2007. The planning has been taking place for several months, but now is the time for making travel arrangements.

Listed below is specific information pertaining to the Directors’ Workshop.

Date: October 14 & 15, 2007
Time: Noon on Sunday, October 14 until 4:00 p.m. on Monday, October 15
Place: Pacific Union Office, West Building
2686 Townsgate Road
Westlake Village, CA 91320
Costs: NONE to the local site director. The Union Office and local conference offices will be paying for travel, hotel, meals, and misc. expenses - including a substitute teacher if one is required for the director’s attendance!

In case you are wondering what we will be doing during the workshop, there is an agenda which will guide us through the day and a half. Naturally, networking and sharing will be an important part of our time together. In addition, though, the focus will be on the future of private, sectarian early childhood education programs and the future of Adventist preschools in particular. You will have the opportunity to answer questions such as:

- Where are we currently?
- Where should we go from here?
- How will Universal Pre-Kindergarten initiatives affect Adventist programs?
- What structures need to be in place for Adventists to be assured of a successful future in early childhood?
- What should those structures look like?

Guaranteed: your input on these issues will be used for future discussions and organizational policy development.

“But wait... there’s more...”

In addition to future planning, Monday will find us looking at some serious issues and concerns regarding employment, staffing and program safety. No director wants to face a lawsuit, and Monday’s presentations will be very helpful in teaching each of us how to avoid them and what to do when a lawsuit is unavoidable.

We have even planned for a vendor from Standard Publishing to have a display booth of religious preschool teaching materials. Please come prepared to browse and buy! No doubt, each center will enjoy and be blessed by these materials.

Please take advantage of this opportunity to meet other Adventist program directors, local conference personnel, network, share, learn and grow. We have planned this workshop especially for you.

Until we meet in October, blessings and safe traveling!

Central CA Director’s Meeting, 2005
Southeastern CA Director’s Meeting, 2004
**Updates for 2007**

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<th>Reminders</th>
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| **Hand Sanitizers and Wipes**

Hand sanitizing gels and wipes contain a surprisingly large amount of alcohol and a young child who swallows enough of these products can experience intoxication, possibly even alcohol poisoning. “Ingesting as little as an ounce or two of this product could be fatal to a toddler,” says Heidi Kuhl, a health educator at the Central New York Poison Control Center.

Bottles of topical anti-bacterial products are labeled with warnings. Unfortunately, too often these products are seen as safe, similar to hand lotion.

Most early childhood programs use both sanitizing gels and wipes containing alcohol. Even though the use of such products does help to reduce illness, safety is always important. Direct adult supervision cannot be overemphasized! To properly sanitize the hands, soap and water should be used. A hand sanitizer can not and should not take the place of proper cleansing procedures with soap and water.

Hopefully this reminder will help keep these products out of the reach of young children and their use limited by supervising adults.

For more information, visit:

**Material Safety Data Sheets**

Because we work with young children and are constantly cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and toys, it is good for us to be reminded that all items used for cleaning, disinfecting, and deodorizing are to be considered “hazardous chemicals”. Back in 1970, the U.S. Department of Labor set forth some standards and regulations that must be followed by all employers, regardless of company size. Unfortunately, these regulations are often overlooked.

Remember to update all MSDS files and require each employee to sign an acknowledgement form stating they have read the MSD Sheets and know where to find them in the event of an emergency.

To help accomplish this annual task, visit the PUC ECEC website at [http://earlychildhood.puconline.org/](http://earlychildhood.puconline.org/) and look under the link titled “Records to be Maintained”. Under the Administrative Records sub-heading, there is a link to an MSDS repository where you can find and print any MSD Sheet needed.

For more detailed information on the government’s MSDS regulations, visit their web site at: [http://www.osha.gov/](http://www.osha.gov/)

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The early childhood education community is gathering in Chicago! More than 20,000 early childhood professionals from around the world attend the NAEYC Annual Conference & Expo to discuss the everyday issues of our work with young children and families.

**Your chance to connect.** The NAEYC Annual Conference & Expo is widely recognized as one of the most valuable professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators working in programs for young children. Participants get wonderful opportunities to connect with fellow educators who share their commitment to young children and quality education. Many say that the opportunity to meet others going through similar experiences is the top reason to attend the NAEYC Annual Conference!

**Your opportunity to learn.** The Conference is filled with sessions designed to provide practical information to take home and use immediately. You will reflect on new research and its potential to improve teaching, learn about team building and staff retention, and explore new strategies for preparing early childhood professionals.

**Your capacity to grow.** This is a great opportunity to strengthen your knowledge of the best approaches to high-quality early childhood education. Renowned experts will cover a wide range of issues, including early literacy, social and emotional development, infant care, support for families, and school readiness. Many sessions will explore issues related to the ten new NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards—the foundation for the reinvented NAEYC Accreditation system for programs for young children.

So mark your calendar now, and join us in Chicago this fall. Conference sessions will be held at McCormick Place Convention Center located at 2301 S. Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois, 60616.

**Adventist Child Care Network**

**2007 Annual Meeting**

**Chicago, November 7-10**

*The Adventist Child Care Network will meet on Wednesday, Nov. 7 from 7:00-8:30 p.m. for the annual business and networking meeting. On Friday, Nov. 9, from 6:30-8:00 p.m., Adventist early childhood professionals are welcome to join us for a sundown worship service. Saturday morning we will assemble for Sabbath morning worship service and lunch. ACCN meetings will be held in an NAEYC assigned room; see final bulletin for room assignments. For more information, contact Christine Gillan-Byrne at (805) 490-6055, or christine@puconline.org.*
Looking for Adventist teachers, directors and administrators? In order to broaden the search, early childhood programs can post upcoming job openings on the North American Division website. Job postings will remain on the website for eight weeks. After which, the posting will be deleted, unless an extension request is made by the “School Contact”.

This is a free service of the North American Division and participation is voluntary. What a blessing this posting option can be for our early childhood programs! Use this option for your employment searches in addition to current practices and provide ACCN with feedback. The more we use this service, the more useful it will become for all of us across the NAD.

Job posting site:

NAD Education home page:

Adventist Directory Website

Try out the new Adventist Directory website (under development)
http://www.adventistdirectory.org/default.asp

Search for up to date information on Adventist churches, schools, preschools, hospitals, book stores, libraries, universities, divisions, unions, conferences, missions, ADRA, orphanages, radio stations, ...

On the General Conference website, the Adventist Organizational Directory provides an organizational locator and standard reference for Adventist organizations and entities worldwide. This database can list the name, address, phone, fax, email, and website link to your particular entity along with maps and driving directions.

This is a free service of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Organizations within the NAD are created and managed by eAdventist. All conference clerks have accounts so they can enter your center’s data at your request.

This is one more avenue for free advertising!
GC Adventist Directory:
http://www.adventistdirectory.org/default.asp

Need help? Call us at 805-490-6055 – we’re here to serve!

Red Bluff Adventist Church in northern California is looking for a director for their soon-to-open new preschool. If interested, please contact Coreen Hicks at the Northern California Conference Office of Education at (925) 685-4300. Mrs. Hicks’ email is chicks@ncc.adventist.org

Certainly there are additional employment opportunities throughout the Pacific Union territory. Please keep the Union Office of Education Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Division informed and we will do our best to help find a qualified individual to fulfill each center’s needs.

Employment opportunities will be posted on the PUC ECEC Division website, in the PUC ECEC Newsletter, in the Adventist Child Care Network Newsletter and forwarded to the Early Childhood Department at Pacific Union College.

2007 Dates to Remember . . .

Sep. 30 Opening Reports due to Union ECEC Division office
Oct 2-4 NAD ECE Task Force (teleconf.)
Oct 18 PUC ECEC Board (Westlake Village, CA)
Oct 14&15 PUC ECEC Directors’ Workshop (Westlake Village, CA)
Nov 7-10 NAЕYC/ACCN Annual Conference (Chicago, IL)
Dec 4-6 NAD ECEC Curriculum Advisory (Palm Springs, CA)

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